

*MEN  
WORTHY  
TO LEAD*

*PETER BAYNE, M.A. LL.D.*

BERKELEY

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Thomas Pimm  
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# MEN WORTHY TO LEAD:

*BEING LIVES OF*

JOHN HOWARD

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

THOMAS CHALMERS

THOMAS ARNOLD

SAMUEL BUDGETT

JOHN FOSTER

BY PETER BAYNE, M.A., LL.D.,

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**GIFT**

## JOHN HOWARD.

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THERE is no fair and adequate, in one word, satisfactory, biography of Howard in the hands of his countrymen,—no estimate of his character and work which can or ought to be final. Aiken's work is mainly a lengthened mental analysis, by no means void of value, and written with clearness and spirit ; but it admits of doubt whether Howard was of that order of men in whose case such analysis can be considered useful or admissible. Brown's life contains a true image of Howard ; but it rests there in rude outline, too much as the statue lies in the half-cut block. The work wants unity, is fatally dull, and is not free from the generic taints of biography, exaggeration and daubing. Mr Dixon's book is in some respects the best, and in some the worst I have seen on Howard. The account it gives of his journeys is spirited and clear, and no charge of dullness can be brought against its general style. Yet it may be pronounced, as a whole, and in one word, wrong. It is set on a false key. It is brisk, sparkling, continually pointed ; if it does not directly share the characteristics of either, it seems to belong to a debateable region between flippancy and bombast ; in fatal measure, it wants chasteness and repose. No man can be named in whose delineation these characteristics are so totally out of

place, and these wants so plainly irreparable, as in that of Howard. The main attribute of his nature, the universal aspect of his life, was calmness : he ever reminds one of a solemn hymn, sung with no instrumental accompaniment, with little musical power, but with the earnest melody of the heart, in an old Hebrew household. Mr Dixon gives his readers a wrong idea of the man : more profoundly wrong than could have arisen from any single mistake,—and such, of a serious nature, there are in his work,—for it results from the whole tone and manner of the work. A Madonna, in the pure colour and somewhat rigid grace of Francia, stuck round with gumflowers by a Belgian populace ; a Greek statue described by a young American fine writer ;—such are the anomalies suggested by this Life of Howard. There were one or two memoirs published in magazines at the time of his death, but these are now quite unknown. On the whole, the right estimate and proper representation of the founder of Modern Philanthropy have still to be looked for. And at the present moment such are specially required. Since the publication of Mr Carlyle's pamphlets, opinion regarding him has been of one of two sorts : either it is thought that his true place has at length been fixed, that Mr Carlyle's sneers are reasonable ; or unmeasured and undistinguishing indignation has been felt against that writer, and the old rapturous applause of Howard has been prolonged. Neither view of the case is correct. To submit that applause to a calm examination, and discover wherein, and how far, it is and has been just ; to estimate the power of Mr Carlyle's attack, and determine in how far it settles the deserts of its object ; and to offer a brief, yet essentially adequate representation of the life of Howard in its wholeness : such is the attempt made in the following paragraphs.

John Howard was born in London, or its vicinity, about the year 1727 ; the precise locality and the precise date

have been matter of dispute. His mother, of whom we have no information, died in his infancy. His father was a dealer in upholstery wares in London, and realized a considerable fortune. He had a character for parsimony. We are not, indeed, furnished with any instances of remarkable closeness or illiberality, and his conduct to his son affords no marks of such. That the allegation, however, had certain grounds in truth cannot be doubted ; and the circumstance is not a little singular in the father of one who must be allowed, whether with censure or applause, to have found, from the days of his boyhood, a keen delight in giving. But whatever the nature or force of this foible, the character of the elder Howard was, on the whole, worthy and substantial. He was a man of quiet, methodic habits, deeply imbued with religious sentiment ; his views were Calvinistic, and he was member of a denomination unconnected with the English establishment—probably the Independent. He was specially characterized by a rigid observance of the Sabbath. We find in him, indeed, unmistakeable traces of the devout earnestness of an earlier age ; and it admits of little doubt that his religion was a lingering ray of the light which burned so conspicuously in England in the preceding century. While the bacchanal rout of the Restoration made hideous the night of England's departed glory, there were a few, perhaps many, who retired into hidden places, to nurse on household altars the flame which seemed erewhile about to illumine the world ; and in the next century such could not have altogether died away. That deep godliness whose sacred influence, like a resting gleam of dewy light, was shed over the whole career of John Howard, accompanied him from his father's house. Were it not somewhat strange, if it proved to have been a dying ray of the old Puritanism which brightened into Modern Philanthropy !

The boy Howard made no figure in his classes. He was

beyond question, what is generally known as a dull boy. He never acquired a perfect grammatical knowledge, or a ready command, even of his native language. Yet he appears, in his early years, to have given indications of a character different from that of ordinary dull boys. His schoolfellows seem to have discerned him, despite his slowness, to possess qualities deserving honourable regard ; they saw that he was unobtrusive, self-respecting, unostentatiously but warmly generous. Price, doubtless one of the quickest of boys, and Howard, slow as he was, were drawn towards each other at school, and formed a friendship broken only by death. He succeeded also, and with no conscious effort, in inspiring his older friends and relatives with a sense of the general worth, the substantial, reliable value, of his character. He was known to be sedate, serious, discreet ; his word could be depended upon ; his sagacity was true ; above all, he was simple, quiet, modest.

It being manifest that he had no vocation to letters, his father very sensibly removed him from school, and bound him apprentice to Messrs Newnham & Shipley, grocers in the city of London. A premium of £700 was paid with him ; he was furnished with separate apartments, and a couple of saddle-horses. There is no mark of parsimony here.

In 1742, his father died, leaving him heir to considerable property, and seven thousand pounds in money. By the provisions of the will, he was not to enter on his inheritance ere reaching his twenty-fourth year. But his guardians permitted him at once to undertake the principal management of his affairs. As he was still a mere boy, seventeen or eighteen at most, this must be regarded as a decisive proof of the high estimation in which he was held by those who had been in a position to form an estimate of his character. He speedily quitted the establishment in the city ; his apprenticeship was never completed.

Not long after his father's death, he travelled for some time on the Continent, and, on his return, went into lodgings at Stoke-Newington. Here he continued for several years. His existence was quiet, even, in no way remarkable, broken only by visits to the west of England on account of his health. This last was quite unsettled. It is indeed to be borne in mind, in the contemplation of his whole career, that he had to sustain a life-long struggle with ill health, that all the influences, to sour the temper, to close the heart, to dim the intellect, to enfeeble the will, which are included in that one word, bore perpetually on Howard. His constitution was by no means sound, and had a strong determination towards consumption. In his unnoticed retirement at Stoke-Newington it is easy to picture him ; his pale, tranquil countenance, marked, perhaps, with somewhat of the weary and oppressed look that comes of constant acquaintance with weakness and pain, but unclouded by any repining, and mildly lighted by modest self-respect, by inborn kindness, by deep, habitual piety. He derived some pleasure from a slight intermeddling with certain of the simplest parts of natural philosophy and medical science : of the latter he seems to have obtained a somewhat considerable knowledge.

This quiet existence was, after a time, rather interestingly and unexpectedly enlivened. Howard, in one set of apartments which he occupied, met with less attention than he deemed his due ; probably it was thought his mild nature could be imposed upon with impunity : he quitted the place. Entering lodgings kept by a widow named Loidore, he found himself waited upon to his absolute satisfaction. In his new abode illness overtook him, or rather his perpetual ill health reached a crisis. Mrs Loidore tended him with all possible kindness ; and the result on his part was not only gratitude, but, as we believe, sincere attachment. On his recovery, he offered her his hand. She was above fifty ; he was now

about twenty-five. Her health, too, was delicate; but Howard was resolute, and, after of course objecting, she of course consented. The circumstance indicates Howard's extreme simplicity of nature, and power to do, in the face of talk and laughter, what he thought right and desirable: it may also be regarded as one proof among many of a naturally affectionate nature: it reveals nothing further.

For two or three years, the married pair resided at Stoke-Newington, much in the same manner, we presume, as formerly. Howard had a real, though by no means ardent, affection for his wife; it was a sincere affliction he experienced when, after the above period, she died.

Such was the youthful period of Howard's life. The extent of information which the few incidents it embraces affords us regarding him may be summed up by saying, that they show him to have been methodic, gentle, and, above all, considerately kind. He seems never to have allowed the pleasure of making a fellow-creature happier to have escaped him.

He was now about twenty-eight years of age. Unbound by any tie to England, he determined again to travel. The excitement arising from the occurrence of the great earthquake at Lisbon was still fresh, and he was attracted to Portugal. He sailed for Lisbon, in a vessel called the *Hanover*. His voyage, however, was not destined to have a peaceful termination; and the circumstances into which he was about to be thrown exercised a perceptible influence on his future career. The ship was taken by a French privateer; Howard was made prisoner. The treatment he met with was inhuman. For forty hours he was kept with the other prisoners on board the French vessel, without water, and with "hardly a morsel of food." They were then carried into Brest, and committed to the castle. They were flung into a dungeon; and, after a further period of starvation, "a joint of mutton



was at length thrown into the midst of them, which, for want of the accommodation of so much as a solitary knife, they were obliged to tear to pieces, and gnaw like dogs." There was nothing in the dungeon to sleep on, except some straw ; and in such a place, and with such treatment, Howard and his fellow-prisoners remained for nearly a week. He was then removed to Carpaix, and afterwards to Morlaix, where he impressed his jailer with such a favourable opinion of his character, that he was permitted to enjoy an amount of liberty not usually accorded to prisoners in his situation.

At Morlaix Howard had inducement and apology enough for remaining idle, or, at least, for occupying himself solely in negotiations for his own release, and in gathering up his strength after his hardships. But he did not remain idle, nor did he abandon himself to the above occupations. The sufferings he had witnessed while inmate of a French prison would not let him rest. He had seen something amiss, something unjust, something which pained his heart as a feeling man ; his English instinct of order and of work was outraged ; there was something to be done ; and he set himself to do it. He collected information respecting the state of English prisoners of war in France. He found that his own treatment was part, and nowise a remarkable part, of a system ; that many hundreds of these prisoners had perished through sheer ill usage ; and that thirty-six had been buried in a hole at Dinan in one day. In fact, he discovered that he had come upon an abomination and iniquity on the face of the earth, which, strangely enough, had been permitted to go on unheeded until it had reached this frightful excess. He learned its extent, and departed with his information for England. He was permitted to cross the Channel, on pledging his word to return, if a French officer was not exchanged for him. He secured his own liberation, and at once set to work on behalf of his oppressed countrymen. His

representations were effectual. Those prisoners of war who were confined in the three prisons which had been the principal scene of the mischief, returned to England in the first cartel ships that arrived. Howard modestly remarks, that perhaps his sufferings on this occasion increased his sympathy with the inhabitants of prisons. There is not much to be said of these simple and unimposing circumstances. They merely show that he, on coming into a position to do a piece of work, did it at once and thoroughly; that his feelings were not of the sentimental sort, which issue in tears or words, but of the substantial and silent sort, which issue in deeds; that what had doubtless been seen by many a dapper officer, and perhaps by prisoners not military, in full health and with ample leisure, had not been righted until seen by Howard, sickly and slow of speech. It was nothing great or wonderful that he did: in the circumstances, nine out of ten would have done nothing at all. He was thanked by the commissioners for the relief of sick and wounded seamen; but his real reward was the intense pleasure with which he must have hailed the arrival of those cartel ships, and felt that at least so much of iniquity and cruelty was ended. For the first time in his life, dull Howard was at the top of his class.

Abandoning, for the present, all thoughts of foreign travel, Howard now retired to Bedfordshire, where he possessed an estate. It was situated at the village of Cardington, and had been the scene of his childhood: it was his principal residence during life. We come to contemplate him in what he himself declared to have been the only period of his life in which he enjoyed real pleasure. Though quiet and unobserved, that pleasure was indeed real and deep.

He had reached the prime of life; his years were about thirty. His character, in its main features, was matured. He was quiet, circumspect, considerate; he knew himself, and was guarded by a noble modesty from obtruding into any

sphere for which he was not fitted by nature ; the groundwork of his character was laid in method, kindness, and deep, unquestioning godliness. The time had arrived when he was to experience a profound and well-placed affection, and to have it amply returned. Henrietta Leeds was the daughter of Edward Leeds of Croxton, in Cambridgeshire : she was about the same age with Howard, and seemed formed by nature precisely for his wife. She resembled him in deep and simple piety. She had drawn up a covenant in which she consigned herself, for time and eternity, to her Father in heaven, and signed it with her own hand. She resembled him in general simplicity of nature : she had no taste or liking for aught beyond what was plain and neat. Most of all, she resembled him in kindness of disposition : the bestowal of happiness was the source of her keenest joy. Her features were regular ; their expression mild, somewhat pensive, and not without intelligence : a little gilding from love might make her face seem beautiful. Where she and Howard first met does not appear ; but meet they did, and thought it might be advisable to make arrangements to obviate the necessity of future parting. His love was in no sense rapturous. It was sincere and deep, but characteristic : it retained, at a period when such is usually dispensed with, the noble human faculty of looking before and after. Love has a thousand modes and forms, all of which may be consistent with reality and truth. It may come like the burst of morning light, kindling the whole soul into new life and radiance ; it may grow, inaudibly and unknown, until its roots are found to be through and through the heart, entwined with its every fibre : it is unreal and false only when it is a name for some form of selfishness. Howard's was a quiet, earnest, undemonstrative affection. He was drawn by a thousand sympathies to Harriet ; never did nature say more clearly to man, that here was the one who had been created to be his helpmeet : he heard nature's voice,

and loved. But he was quite calm. He even looked over the wall of the future into the paradise which he was to enter, and remarked the possibility of difference arising between the happy pair whom he saw walking in the distance. Accordingly, he went to Harriet, and proposed a stipulation that, in case of diversity of opinion, his voice should be decisive. Harriet assented. They were married in 1758, and took up their residence at Cardington. Here, with the exception of a few years spent at a small property which Howard purchased in Hampshire, they continued until the death of Mrs Howard.

One is tempted to linger for a brief space on the sole pleasant spot in Howard's earthly journey. Ere he met Harriet, he had turned to the right hand and to the left, scarce knowing or caring whither he went, and dogged always by pain. Not long after her death, he heard the call which made him a name for ever, and which bade him leave the wells and the palm-trees of rest, to take his road along the burning sand of duty. Not only may the spectacle of a truly happy English home be pleasing, but we may gather from the prospect certain hints touching the actual nature and precise value of Howard's character.

The pleasures of the new pair were somewhat varied. The embellishment of the house and grounds went so far. This was a business of particular interest with Howard. He built additions to his house, and laid out three acres in pleasure-grounds, erecting an arbour, and cutting and planting according to his simple taste; the approving smile of Harriet always sped the work. A visit to London was proposed and carried into effect; but the enjoyment obtained was nowise great, for neither was adapted for town life, and Harriet in particular longed for the green fields. Natural philosophy, in a very small way, was put under contribution. Then there was occasional visiting and entertaining of the country

gentlemen of Bedfordshire. Howard always exercised a warm and dignified hospitality, and, though remarkably abstemious himself, kept ever a good table and excellent wines for his guests. But of all the joys of this Bedfordshire home, by far the principal arose out of the fact that Howard and his wife were both "by nature admirers of happy human faces." Around Cardington there was soon drawn a circle of such ; gradually widening, still brightening, and, by nature's happy law, ever shedding a stronger radiance of reflected joy on the centre whence their own gladness came. Shortly after the marriage, we find Harriet disposing of certain jewels, and putting the price into what they called the charity-purse ; its contents went to procure this crowning luxury, happy human faces. Since this pleasure may be supposed to interest us more than any of the others, it is worth while to inquire how the money was disposed of.

The village of Cardington had been the abode of poverty and wretchedness. Its situation was low and marshy ; the inhabitants were unhealthy ; ague, that haunts the fen and cowers under the mantle of the mist, especially abounded. Altogether, this little English village had the discontented, uneasy look of a sick child. And the intellectual state of its people corresponded to their physical ; no effort had been made to impart to them aught of instruction. Part of this village was on the estate of John Howard. Unnoticed by any, and not deeming himself noteworthy, but having in his bosom a true, kind heart, and loyally anxious to approve himself to his God, he came to reside upon it with his wife. No bright talents were his ; and his partner was a simple creature, of mild womanly ways, made to love rather than to think. Yet the fact was, account for it as you will, that, year by year, the village of Cardington showed a brighter face to the morning sun ; year by year, the number of damp, unwholesome cottages grew less ; year by year, you might see

new and different cottages spring up, little kitchen-gardens behind, little flower-gardens before, neat pailings fronting the road, roses and creepers looking in at the windows, well-washed, strong-lunged, sunny-faced children frolicking round the doors. These cottages were so placed that they could see the sunlight ; the mist and the ague were driven back. Their inhabitants paid an easy rent, sent their children to school, were a contented, orderly, sober people. Cardington became "one of the neatest villages in the kingdom." If you asked one of the villagers to what or whom it owed all this, the answer would have been—John Howard.

Kind-hearted, conscientious, shrewd, and accurate, he had lost no time in acquainting himself with the evils with which he had to contend, and addressing himself to the contest. The damp, unhealthy cottages on his own estate were by degrees removed, and such as we have described built in their stead ; those not on his own estate, requiring a similar treatment, were purchased. He let the new cottages at an advantageous rate, annexing certain conditions to their occupancy. He became the centre of quite a patriarchal system. His tenants were, to a certain extent, under his authority ; they were removable at will, they were bound over to sobriety and industry, they were required to abstain from such amusements as he deemed of immoral tendency, and attendance at public worship was enjoined. Besides the customary ordinances, there was Divine service in a cottage set apart for the purpose, the villagers, we are told, gladly availing themselves of the additional opportunity. Schools also were established, not in Cardington alone, but in the neighbouring hamlets. He ruled a little realm of his own ; a realm which, in the eighteenth century, was very favourably distinguished from the surrounding regions ; an unmarked patriarchal domain, whose government was, on the whole, beneficent.

When we contemplate the phenomenon of Howard's in-

fluence at Cardington, do we not experience a strong impulse to question the fact of his having been, even intellectually, the ordinary, unoriginal man he has been called? It is fair to recollect that he was of that class which, perhaps pre-eminently, does nothing; of that class whose epitaph Mr Carlyle has written in *Sartor Resartus*. His task was not perhaps very difficult; but just think of the effect, if every English landlord performed his duty so conscientiously and so well. A biographer of Howard, writing when the present century was well advanced, has recorded that Cardington still retained, among English villages, a look of "order, neatness, and regularity." If mere common sense did this, it was common sense under some new motive and guidance; we can only regret that it so rarely follows the higher light of godliness. And if Howard's claim to positive applause is slight, what are we to say of his exculpation from the positive sin which, during that century, accumulated so fearfully on the head of certain classes and corporations in England? Different had been the prospect now, had England, in that century, been covered with such schools as Howard's. Surely one may ask, without arrogance, why did not the Church of England accomplish at least so much then?

In his own household, there reigned calmness and cheerful content. The whole air and aspect of the place was such as might have suggested that perfect little picture by Tennyson,—

"An English home—grey twilight pour'd  
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,  
A haunt of ancient Peace."

He lived much in the consideration of Old Testament times and worthies, shaping his life after that of the Hebrew Patriarchs. His Bible was to him a treasury of truth, which he never even dreamed exhaustible. As he looked over the

brightening scene of his humble endeavours, and the pleasant bowers around his own dwelling, and felt all his tranquil joy represented and consummated in his Harriet, we may imagine those words breathing through his heart—"I will be as the dew unto Israel:" as the dew, stealing noiselessly down in an evening stillness, unseen by any eye, yet refreshing the very heart of nature. Harriet, with all her simplicity, was a perfect wife; she could hear the beating of her husband's heart. Once there was somewhat over from the yearly expenditure. Howard, thinking his wife might derive enjoyment from a trip, proposed that they should spend it in a visit to London. Harriet looked quietly into his eyes, and answered, "What a pretty cottage it would build!" Conceive the smile of silent unspeakable satisfaction, of deep unbounded love, that would spread over the placid features of Howard as he heard these words.

The part taken by the kind and gentle Harriet in the dissemination of blessing over Howard's neighbourhood was no-wise unimportant. In the hour of sickness and distress, she was to be seen by the bed or the fireside, supplying little wants, whispering words of consolation. She made it also a peculiar part of her duty to see that the female portion of the community was employed, and to supply them with work when threatened with destitution.

Thus was Howard, cheered and assisted by his wife, an unassuming, godly English landlord, doing his work, and never imagining that he was a profitable servant. His tenantry, and specially his domestics, loved him; although, as we are happy to find, since it is an almost conclusive, and certainly indispensable proof of decision and discrimination, there was not a complete absence of murmuring and insinuation against him in the village. He engaged in constant and intimate converse with his dependants, interesting himself in their affairs, and giving little pieces of advice. He might be



seen entering their cottages, and sitting down to chat and eat an apple. We can figure him, too, as he walked along the road,

“ With measured footfall, firm and mild,”

stopping the children he met, giving each of them a half-penny, and imparting the valuable and comprehensive advice, to “ be good children, and wash their hands and faces.” Can we not discern, as he utters the words, a still smile of peace and satisfaction on his really noble English countenance? There was no sign of creative power in his eye; there were no lines of deep thought on his brow; but decision, and shrewdness, and intense though governed kindness, were written on that face. Above all, it was cloudless in its clearness. It was the calm, open countenance of a man who could look the whole world in the face, which was darkened by no stain of guile, or guilt, or self-contempt, and on which, through habitual looking upwards, there was a glow of the mild light of heaven. Nor was it destitute of a certain reposing strength, a look of complete self-knowledge and self-mastery, gently shaded, as it was, by a deep but manly humanity, which told again of the bended knee and the secret walk with God. When we look at Howard’s portrait, we cease to wonder that his face was always received as an unquestionable pledge of perfect honour and substantial character.

There was one drop by which the cup of happiness in the home at Cardington might still have been augmented. Howard and his wife had no child. Harriet seems to have been peculiarly adapted to perform the duties of a mother: so gentle, so full of quiet sense, so well able to read a want ere it reached the tongue. At length, after seven years of married life, on Wednesday, the 27th of March 1765, she had a son. On the ensuing Sabbath, Howard went to church as usual; all seemed to be going well. After his return she was suddenly taken ill, and died in his arms. She had just

seen her boy, just felt the unuttered happiness of a new love, just discerned that a fresh brightness rested on the face of the world, and then she had to close her eyes, and lie down in the silent grave.

Howard's feelings, it is scarce requisite to say, were not of the sort which commonly reach the surface. There was nothing sudden or impulsive in his nature ; his very kindness and affection were ever so tempered, ever rendered so equable, by consideration, that they might at times wear the mask of austerity. But the sorrow he felt for his Harriet reached the innermost deeps of his soul. A light had passed from the "revolving year ;" the flowers which Love may strew in the path of the "stern daughter of the voice of God"—for Duty herself strews no flowers—had withered away ; until he again clasped the hand of Harriet, his enjoyment had ceased. He laid her in her grave, and a simple tablet in Cardington Church told the simple truth, that she had "opened her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness." A good many years afterwards, on the eve of a departure for the Continent, from which he might never return, Howard was walking with his son in his grounds, and mentioning some improvements which he had contemplated :—"These, however, Jack," he said, "in case I should not come back, you will pursue or not as you may think proper ; but remember, *this walk* was planted by *your mother* ; and if ever you touch a twig of it, may blessing never rest upon you !"

His infant son was now all that was left on earth to Howard. He loved him with the whole force of his nature. Two strong feelings, having reference to this earth, and two alone, were, in the years of his long journeyings, to be found in his bosom : the one was the memory of Harriet, the other the love of his boy.

But it is not unimportant to a perfect comprehension of

the character of Howard to know that there was, in his general deportment as husband and father, a gravity, decision, and authority, which wore the aspect of austereness. The founder of philanthropy was as free as ever man from any form of sentimentalism ; it was for real affliction, for substantial pain, he felt and acted ; a tender, winning, soothing manner was never his. Whatever may be said of modern philanthropists, he certainly was not one whose feelings carried him away, who saw distress and injustice, and, bursting into tears, rushed, half-blinded with his sympathy, to make bad worse. He has been spoken of by some as if he resembled one who, perceiving a child drowning in a reservoir, and being moved to pity by its cries, casts down an embankment to save it, and floods a country. He was no such man. Since the world began, until he appeared, no one had done so much for the relief of distress, simply as such ; and yet it is probable that few men have lived who could look upon pain with calmer countenance than he. Nineteen men in twenty would have been weeping, and either blundering or leaving the distress alone ; Howard remained quite cool, looked at it, measured it, mastered it.

For about a year after the death of his wife, he continued to reside at Cardington. Towards the end of the year 1766 he visited Bath ; ill health had again, in new extremity, returned upon him. In the spring of the following year he travelled to Holland, and, quickly returning home, remained at Cardington until it was time to send his son to school. In the interval, nothing worthy of notice occurred ; he pursued his old plans for the improvement of his neighbourhood, deriving his principal comfort from his boy.

At length it became proper to send his son to school ; and Howard prepared again to visit the Continent. Cardington had become sad to him. He in great measure broke up his establishment there, providing, with considerate kindness, for

his domestics ; these, as has been elsewhere remarked, loved him with an affection worthy of the servants of an old patriarch. He departed in the autumn of 1769 ; his intention was to visit the south of Italy, and probably remain there for the winter : he went by Calais, the south of France, and Geneva.

We arrive now at the most important epoch in Howard's life. The reader has been informed of the pervasion, from a period too early to be precisely fixed, of his whole character by godliness ; and we saw how the fact influenced his benevolent exertions in Bedfordshire. We have not yet however looked, so to speak, into the heart of Howard's religion ; we have only noted it incidentally, and from afar. It is necessary to view it more closely ; it will be of great importance to ascertain the weight and nature of its influence. His spiritual life now reached a crisis, which determined, in certain important respects, his future character and career.

Howard had intentions of spending the winter of 1769-70 either in the south of Italy or in Geneva. On arriving at Turin he abandoned the project. He had been pondering seriously the object and nature of his journey. He accused himself of mis-spending the "talent" committed to him, of gratifying a mere curiosity with those pecuniary means which might be turned in some way to God's glory, and which were necessarily withdrawn from works of mercy ; he thought of the loss of so many English Sabbaths ; he thought of "a retrospective view on a death-bed ;" he thought also of "distance from his dear boy." He determined to return. He concludes the memorandum from which these facts are gathered in the following words : \*—"Look forward, oh my soul ! How low, how mean, how little, is everything but

\* Howard did not write English grammatically ; the spelling and punctuation are therefore altered.

what has a view to that glorious world of light, life, and love. The preparation of the heart is of God. Prepare the heart, oh God ! of thy unworthy creature, and unto Thee be all the glory, through the boundless ages of eternity."

"This night my trembling soul almost longs to take its flight to see and know the wonders of redeeming love,—join the triumphant choir ; sin and sorrow fled away, God, my Redeemer, all in all. Oh ! happy spirits that are safe in those mansions."

He turned homewards, and in February 1770 was at the Hague. We have here a further record of his spiritual life.

"Hague, Sunday Evening, February 11.

"I would record the goodness of God to the unworthiest of his creatures : for some days past a habitual serious frame, relenting for my sin and folly, applying to the blood of Jesus Christ, solemnly surrendering myself and babe to Him, begging the conduct of his Holy Spirit ; I hope, a more tender conscience," evinced "by a greater fear of offending God, a temper more abstracted from this world, more resigned to death or life, thirsting for union and communion with God, as my Lord and my God. Oh ! the wonders of redeeming love ! Some faint hope," that "even I ! through redeeming mercy in the perfect righteousness, the full atoning sacrifice, shall ere long be made the monument of the rich, free grace and mercy of God, through the Divine Redeemer. Oh, shout my soul ! Grace, grace, free, sovereign, rich and unbounded grace ! Not I, not I, an ill-deserving, hell-deserving creature ! But, where sin has abounded, I trust grace superabounds. Some hope !—what joy in that hope !—that nothing shall separate my soul from the love of God in Christ Jesus ; and, my soul, as such a frame is thy delight, pray frequently and fervently to the Father of spirits, to bless His word and your retired moments to your serious conduct in life.

"Let not, my soul, the interests of a moment engross thy

thoughts, or be preferred to my eternal interests. Look forward to that glory which will be revealed to those who are faithful to death. My soul, walk thou with God ; be faithful ; hold on, hold out ; and then,—what words can utter !

“J. H.”

I anxiously desire to avoid presumption here, and would leave every reader to his own judgment and conclusion in the matter ; but I think the workings of Howard’s mind through this portion of his history may be traced.

It appears that, on leaving Cardington, his mind had engaged in deep reflection. His boy had gone away from him ; his Harriet was sleeping silently, her tender ways to cheer him no more ; he looked over his past life, from which the last rays of joy’s sunlight were departing ; he looked forward to an old age, embittered by perpetual ill health. His mind awoke, in the discipline of sorrow, to a deeper earnestness. He felt, with sterner realization than heretofore, that the world was a desert, and time a dream ; with a new and tremendous energy his soul rose towards the eternal kingdoms. He looked with earnest scrutiny within, he closed his eye more to all around, and gazed upwards from his knees for the smiling of one countenance upon him. The intensity of his feelings would not comport with the prosecution of his journey to Italy. He mused upon it in the strain that has been indicated. He concluded that it was his duty to return home ; in a state of mind not a little agitated, he proceeded in the direction of England. He did not, however, proceed further for the present than the Hague. His mind appears here to have become calmer ; the second of the extracts just given reveals an almost rapturous frame of spirit. It is a detail of God’s goodness towards him ; and, let it be remarked, that this goodness consists in work wrought in him, in his closer approximation to the requirements of God’s law. The man who can feel ecstatic joy for that, and give God all the glory,

has nothing higher to attain to in this world ; and on him no essential change will be wrought by passing through the gates of heaven.

He again turned southwards. At Lyons he writes thus :

“ Lyons, April 4, 1770.

“ Repeated instances of the unwearied mercy and goodness of God : preserved hitherto in health and safety ! Blessed be the name of the Lord ! Endeavour, oh my soul ! to cultivate and maintain a thankful, serious, humble, and resigned frame and temper of mind. May it be thy chief desire that the honour of God, the spread of the Redeemer’s name and gospel, may be promoted. Oh, consider the everlasting worth of spiritual and Divine enjoyments ; then thou wilt see the vanity and nothingness of worldly pleasures. Remember, oh my soul ! St Paul, who was determined to know nothing in comparison of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. A tenderness of conscience I would ever cultivate ; no step would I take without acknowledging God. I hope my present journey, though again into Italy, is no way wrong, rejoicing if in any respect I could bring the least improvement that might be of use to my own country. But, oh my soul ! stand in awe, and sin not ; daily, fervently pray for restraining grace ; remember, if thou desirest the death of the righteous, and thy latter end like his, thy life must be so also. In a little while thy course will be run, thy sands finished ; a parting farewell with my ever dear boy, and then, oh my soul ! be weighed in the balance,—wanting, wanting ! but oh, the glorious hope of an interest in the blood and righteousness of my Redeemer and my God ! In the most solemn manner I commit my spirit into thy hand, oh Lord God of my salvation !

“ My hope in time ! my trust through the boundless ages of eternity !

JOHN HOWARD.”

The last quotation which it is necessary to make is one of very great importance. It commences with a slight retro-

spect and self-examination ; it passes into a deliberate dedication of himself and his all to God :—

“ Naples, May 27, 1770.

“ When I left Italy last year, it then appeared most prudent and proper ; my return, I hope, is under the best direction, not presumptuous, being left to the folly of a foolish heart. Not having the strongest spirits or constitution, my continuing long in Holland or any place lowers my spirits ; so I thought returning would be no uneasiness on the review, as sinful and vain diversions are not my object, but the honour and glory of God my highest ambition. Did I now see it wrong by being the cause of pride, I would go back ; but being deeply sensible it is the presence of God that makes the happiness of every place, so, oh my soul ! keep close to Him in the amiable light of redeeming love ; and, amidst the snares thou art particularly exposed to in a country of such wickedness and folly, stand thou in awe, and sin not. Commune with thine own heart ; see what progress thou makest in thy *religious* journey ! Art thou nearer the heavenly Canaan,—the vital flame burning clearer and clearer ? or are the concerns of a moment engrossing thy foolish heart ? Stop ; remember thou art a candidate for eternity : daily, fervently pray for wisdom ; lift up your eyes to the Rock of Ages, and then look down on the glory of this world. A little while, and thy journey will be ended ; be thou faithful unto death. Duty is thine, though the power is God’s ; pray to Him to give thee a heart to hate sin more, uniting thy heart in his fear. Oh, magnify the Lord, my soul ; and, my spirit, rejoice in God my Saviour ! His free grace, unbounded mercy, love unparalleled, goodness unlimited. And oh, this mercy, this love, this goodness, exerted for me ! Lord God, why me ? When I consider, and look into my heart, I doubt, I tremble. Such a vile creature ; sin, folly, and imperfection in every action ! Oh, dreadful thought !—a body of sin and death



I carry about me, ever ready to depart from God ; and with all the dreadful catalogue of sins committed, my heart faints within me, and almost despairs. But yet, oh my soul ! why art thou cast down ?—why art thou disquieted ? Hope in God ! His free grace in Jesus Christ ! Lord, I believe ; help my unbelief. Shall I limit the grace of God ? Can I fathom His goodness ? Here, on His sacred day, I, once more in the dust before the Eternal God, acknowledge my sins heinous and aggravated in His sight. I would have the deepest sorrow and contrition of heart, and cast my guilty and polluted soul on thy sovereign mercy in the Redeemer. Oh, compassionate and divine Redeemer, save me from the dreadful guilt and power of sin, and accept of my solemn, free, and, I trust, unreserved, full surrender of my soul, my spirit, my dear child, all I am and have, into thy hands ! Unworthy of thy acceptance ! Yet, oh Lord God of mercy ! spurn me not from thy presence ; accept of me, vile as I am,—I hope a repenting, returning prodigal. I glory in my choice, acknowledge my obligations as a servant of the Most High God ; and now, may the Eternal God be my refuge, and thou, my soul, faithful to that God that will never leave nor forsake thee !

“ Thus, oh my Lord and my God ! is humbly bold, even a *worm*, to covenant with Thee. Do Thou ratify and confirm it, and make me the everlasting monument of Thy unbounded mercy. Amen, amen, amen. Glory to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, amen !

“ Hoping my heart deceives me not, and trusting in His mercy for restraining and preventing grace, though rejoicing in returning what I have received of Him into his hands, yet with fear and trembling, I sign my unworthy name,

“ JOHN HOWARD.”

Howard was not a man who found any special delight in using his pen : the deep modesty of his nature, the deficiency

of his education, his consequent want of affluence in expression, and the whole structure of his character as universally recognised, put this beyond dispute. It was only when his heart was very full, and the emotions with which it burned were as mounting lava, that they overflowed through that channel. The expressions quoted may be confidently regarded as pulses of his spiritual life, proceeding as truly from the centre of his spiritual nature as the blood which at fever heat might gush from his heart, the centre of his physical frame. And consider the earnestness, the stammering, gasping intensity, with which they start ruggedly forth ; mark the awe-struck humility with which he bows down before the Infinite God, and, as it were, the mute amazement of gratitude which, when the smile of God falls out of heaven upon his head, forces him to exclaim, "Lord God, why me?" Surely this last is a remarkable passage of feeling. Will it not be with such an emotion that the redeemed of God, when the eternal inheritance, so far surpassing expectation and desert, at last and suddenly bursts upon their sight, will shrink from asserting their right, and exclaim, "Lord, when did we merit this?" Observe, finally, here, respecting Howard, the completeness of the result,—the unwavering, unexcepting abdication of the throne of the soul to God. This formed the conclusion of that crisis in his spiritual history to which reference has been made.

One other remark must be made respecting these documents. In those awful moments, when Howard was alone with God, and his eyes, looking to the Rock of Ages, were so solemnly raised above every concern of time, there was one earthly visitant that entered the secret places of his heart ; that visitant was his boy.

The time was now near when Howard was to find his peculiar work. It may be said, though with reverence and hesitation, that he was specially fitted for it by God. Implanted

by nature in his bosom, he exhibited from his earliest years a deep and a notably cosmopolitan compassion for the afflicted as such. In early years his nature was stilled, hallowed, and strengthened by religious principle. As he advanced in years, the great truths of Calvinism, or rather that one great truth of Calvinism, The Lord reigneth,—the Lord, just, sovereign, incomprehensible, in whose presence no finite being can speak,—formed a basis, as it were of adamant, for his whole character. He was sorely tried by physical ailments; and, at the risk of his life, was compelled to pursue rigidly abstemious habits, being thus also debarred from all the pleasures of the great world. He was brought soon into actual experience of the distresses suffered by the inhabitants of prisons, and his first piece of positive work in the world was the relief of such. His character was next matured, confirmed, and mellowed, in the soft summer light of a quiet English home, where he loved and was loved by a true wife; and where, in such tasks as we have seen, a mild apprenticeship was served to thoroughness and accuracy. He was then suddenly and awfully struck with affliction; she who was so very beautiful in his eyes,—

“Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky,”—

was taken away from him. And then, after a little time, came that crisis in his spiritual history which his own words so vividly delineate. Whatever were his natural abilities, he awoke from that crisis with a moral strength which no force of temptation could overcome, and a calm dauntlessness which nothing earthly could turn aside. Then he found his work.

Howard's history thus seems to suggest the idea that God intended by him to bring prominently before the world some truth not hitherto duly regarded, to accomplish some work not hitherto adequately done: that the time had arrived when some gospel—shall we call it the gospel of love?—was to be more specially and explicitly unfolded than it had been

heretofore. With deliberate and immoveable faith, he himself entertained this belief, and has put it on record in humble yet sublime words, written when it was well-nigh finished :—  
“I am not at all angry with the reflections that some persons make, as they think to my disparagement, because all they say of this kind gives God the greater honour ; in whose Almighty hand no instrument is weak, in whose presence no flesh must glory ; but the whole conduct of this matter must be ascribed to Providence alone, and God *by me* intimates to the world, however weak and unworthy *I am*, that He espouses the cause,\* and to *Him, to Him alone, be all the praise.*”

Returning from the Continent, Howard remained for a certain period at Cardington : we hear of nothing remarkable in his life for some time. The state of his health in 1772 rendered it advisable to make a tour in the Channel Islands ; but he speedily returned to Bedfordshire. Here, in 1773, he was called to the office of sheriff of the county. He considered it his duty to comply with the invitation. Prudence might have whispered another decision. He was a Dissenter, and by becoming sheriff incurred the liability of very severe penalties. His danger might not be very great ; but it was real. He was not without enemies ; and his act put it in the power of any one of them, with profit to himself, to inflict very serious injury on him. It is, besides, the part of prudence to guard against possibilities : there was at least the possibility that he might suffer. Howard, however, with all his calmness, was too brave to be distinctively prudent. It might astonish some to find this among his adopted maxims,—“A fearless temper and an open heart are seldom strictly allied to prudence.” It is the maxim of a truly brave man. In this affair of the sheriffdom he kept prudence in its proper place : when the voice of duty was clear, its mouth was shut.

\* The italics are Howard's.

The office of sheriff had been hitherto but a dignifying appendage ; its duties mainly those of show. Howard could not regard or treat it thus. He went to his work as usual, quietly, accurately, thoroughly. From time immemorial abuses had prevailed ; safely wrapped in the mantle of custom, they had lived, and moved, and done their measure of evil, unregarded as smoke. The cool, clear eye of Howard, looking straight to the heart of everything, could not but regard them. He had not acted long in the capacity of sheriff, when his attention was arrested by something which struck him as strange and anomalous : something which had its existence amid the light of a brilliant and boasted civilization, but which was fitted rather to cower, snake-like and slimy, in the jungles of barbarism. He fixed his attention upon certain persons who were declared not guilty by the voice of their countrymen, who were acquitted of everything laid to their charge, and thus proved to have endured the hard affliction of confinement and temporary disgrace, when their country had nothing whatever to say against them. He saw that these, on their acquittal, did not immediately return to their welcoming and consoling friends ; that their chains were not at once struck off, with urgent haste and self-accusing regret : they were conveyed back to prison until they should pay certain fees to functionaries connected with the jail and court. Others, who also might have suffered months of confinement, and against whom, from the non-appearance of their prosecutors, not even a charge was preferred, were similarly treated. Others still, regarding whom the Grand Jury could not find such evidence of guilt as rendered it reasonable to try them, went the same way :—all, without semblance of accusation, were haled back to prison. This cruel and glaring outrage on justice and feeling was quietly taking its course, and was likely for some time to do so, in the county of Bedford, when it fixed the gaze of John Howard. Its days were numbered.

His proceedings were quick : observation, decision, and action, seem almost to have been united. The abuse was undeniable and indefensible ; its mode of cure was by paying, in some other manner, the functionaries interested. The justices of the county were the men to be applied to ; the application was made. But it now became apparent that the days of an abuse, though numbered, may continue for some time to run. A new thing this in the experience of the sedate magistrates ; it was proper to proceed with caution, deliberation, and prudence. The good, formal, drowsy justices looked up through their spectacles, and—found it necessary—to satisfy their minds—by seeing a precedent. Here, then, perhaps, the matter would stop, and the justices be troubled in their dozing no further. Howard did not stop. A precedent must be found : he takes horse at once, and proceeds to seek it in the neighbouring counties.

In those counties Howard met on all hands with injustice and disorder, but found no precedent for his proposed remedy. He saw more than he expected, and more than he came to seek. In his own simple words, he “ beheld scenes of calamity.” Such he could not see without a desire to alleviate ; and a desire with Howard passed, of necessity, into action. Gradually it became plain to him that he had discovered a great work to be done, and that he was the man intended by God to do it. In the performance of this work the rest of his life was spent, and his name became known and revered in every land under heaven. There are three questions to put and to answer respecting it. What was it ? By what motives was Howard impelled to undertake it ? How did he perform it ? It will be important also to consider, as we proceed, whether it had become necessary.

What was this work of Howard’s ?

Correspondent to, and resulting from, the sad discordance and rent in the individual human soul, there has been, in all

ages, a great severance in the human family. A part of that family has been put aside by the rest, and subjected to penal inflictions. Sorrowful, truly, is the prospect thus opened up. In the many-chambered dwelling framed for them by their Father, men could not live together and at peace. The roof and spires of that dwelling seem to rest in sunshine ; in the higher apartments is the voice of mirth and gladness ; lower down the darkness of sorrow begins to thicken ; and, beneath all, there are lightless dungeons, from which, through the whole course of human history, have arisen the broken groans of agony, or the lone wailings of despair. By a stern and awful necessity, these dungeons were never empty ; men were compelled to chain down their brothers in the darkness, lest, like maniacs, they should plunge their knives in the hearts that pitied them, or, like fiends, bring on all the destruction of Sodom : never out of the ears of humanity could pass that doleful voice of lamentation, crying, like the conscience of the race, " Fallen, fallen, fallen."

Respecting these dungeons and their inhabitants, three methods lay open to those who had been bold to take their fellow-men and fling them in fetters out of their sight. They might look down upon them with the fierce glare of indignation, hate, and " revenge ;" they might say, " Caitiffs, we hate you ;" ye have passed beyond the range of law and of pity ; our duty towards you now is to load the whip, and to whet the axe. Or they might adopt a milder, but perhaps still more cruel mode of procedure. They might turn in sickened horror from the sight of the anguish whose existence they would forget ; they might carefully deafen the walls, and stop up every avenue through which the sounds of woe could ascend ; they might then urge the dance, and laugh, and sing ; they might sweep on in the glad pageantry of coronation and victory ; they might listen to the chantings of solemn organs or the light tremblings of bridal music, unsaddened by any

cloud that floated up from below. Meanwhile, calamity might be waxing greater and greater there, writing its pale emblems on many faces ; famine, pestilence, torture, might enter unseen ; a groan of agony might go up to heaven, yet pass unheard by men on earth. Or, lastly, they might say, Be these tenants of the dungeon what they may, they are the children of our Father, the creatures of our God ; we dare do to them precisely what He commands, and has rendered necessary. We shall avoid the demoniac fury of the first method, and the cruel cowardice, the inhuman indolence, of the second. We shall do what law ordains, and that alone : we shall light the lamp of Justice, and commit it to the hand of Love.

At the time when Howard appeared, the second of these methods was widely and sadly prevalent ; and the work he did may be briefly but compendiously indicated in these words :—He penetrated into the dungeons of the world, and compelled men to hear the voice of the agony beneath their feet. The result of this work was, that a voice of pity was heard over the world, saying that the method of blind and revengeful cruelty had gone too far, and that the third method must now be attempted.

In what light did Howard regard his work, and what motives impelled him to undertake it ? Ignorant as a child of metaphysical speculation, his simple theory of the world was, that all men are alike devoid of merit before God, and that there is no reason, by possibility, to be alleged why we should not love every member of the human family. To one expressing surprise at his deep love and pity for the depraved, he made answer thus :—“ I consider that, if it had not been for divine grace, I might have been as abandoned as they are.” In these words is contained, not only an exposition and defence of Howard’s views as a philanthropist, but the whole philosophy of Christian Philanthropy. The subordinate motives which urged Howard on his enterprise, and supported



him in its achievement, are easily discoverable. It is certain that the precise position into which he was brought by the death of his wife rendered his home a place of small comfort. It is true, also, that he had travelled much during his life, and that travelling was by no means disagreeable to him. But the motive which beyond all others impelled him to the work was a conviction that the voice of God bade him go forth. No man in this world acts on a single or simple motive ; and persistent, courageous work extorts the admiration and honour of men, though its motive is not of the noblest. To say that no lower motive than the approbation of God influenced Howard, would be to say that he was no mere man ; but few, or perhaps none, have acted more purely on the highest motive. "Howard is a beautiful philanthropist, eulogized by Burke, and, in most men's minds, a sort of beatified individual. How glorious, having finished off one's affairs in Bedfordshire, or, in fact, finding them very dull, inane, and worthy of being quitted and got away from, to set out on a cruise over the jails, first of Britain, then, finding that answer, over the jails of the habitable globe ! 'A voyage of discovery, a circumnavigation of charity ; to collate distresses, to gauge wretchedness, to take the dimensions of human misery : '—really, it is very fine." These keen and sarcastic words are manifestly intended to convey an impression that in choosing his work Howard had some thought of the "glorious" aspect it would bear in the eyes of men, how grand it would look, how much men would talk about it. The testimony of bare and unassailable facts renders it plain that in few instances recorded in human history, perhaps hardly in any, could such an impression be more profoundly incorrect. Howard's eye was closed as scarce ever human eye was closed, to every influence within the atmosphere of earth. He looked, with a silent earnestness whose intensity was sublime, for recognition and reward,

right into the eye of God. In this highest of all regards he may be mentioned with the holiest of men, with Moses, Daniel, and John.

Our third question, how did Howard perform his work, must be answered at somewhat greater length. We come to look upon him in his actual operations. To detail his several journeys in Great Britain and on the Continent, is indeed impossible here; nor is the attempt in any respect called for; the outline of his work can be sketched, and its general spirit displayed, in a few comprehensive glances.

About the close of the year 1773, there might have been seen, on the high roads of the counties adjoining Bedford, a gentleman on horseback, followed by his servant, travelling at the rate of forty miles a-day. At every town where he rested, he visited the jail. There was no fuss or hurry in his motions, he never lost a moment, he never gave a moment too little to the business in hand, nothing escaped his eye, and there was no spot into which he did not penetrate. He went into places where the noisome and pestilential air compelled him to draw his breath short, where deadly contagion lurked, where physicians refused to follow him. Unagitated yet earnest, he measured every dungeon, explored every particular respecting fare, accommodation, and fees, inquired after the prevalence of disease and the means adopted for its prevention, and learned in every instance the relation which the criminals held to those who superintended and kept the jail. He rested not until he had gone east and west, until he had carried his researches over the jails of Britain and of Europe, until he could credibly declare what was the state of the prisons of the world. That gentleman was John Howard. Was the scene which discovered itself to his eye such as confirms the idea that the time had arrived when an offence against God and man was no longer to be endured, and when rays of light, as just as beneficent, were

to be cast into dungeons that had long been seen only by Heaven ?

A few facts, illustrative of Howard's mode of working, will form the best reply.

He saw prevailing far and wide in England, that palpable and cruel injustice which first set him on his journeying : men declared guiltless were still laid in the dungeon. He found that in the same land it was possible for one whose neighbour owed him a paltry sum, to deprive that neighbour of his liberty, and subject himself and his family to everything short of absolute starvation ; nay, to starvation itself, if it was spread over months instead of days. He found, still under the kindly skies of that free, enlightened, and religious country, that it was possible for men to be farmed by a fellow-man, and fed from so miserable a pittance that they must have suffered the perpetual gnawings of hunger. He found dens or holes under ground, of dimensions such as might have held one wild animal, where several human beings were flung, to gasp and groan the night long. In some, the heat and closeness must have been stifling ; in some, the floors were wet and the walls dripping ; in some, open and reeking sewers poisoned the air ; all that is noisome and revolting to the human sense lay bare to his sickened but unflinching gaze. Death, he discovered, had here a realm of his own, where he escaped the eye of justice and humanity. From time immemorial, uncured and uncared for, a virulent fever dwelt in those dreary abodes ; it had a character of its own ; it was the progeny and it seemed the genius of the place ; it was called the jail-fever. There, in darkness, famine, and loathsome horrors, it preyed on those victims who were handed over to it, and whose life-strength was broken by shame, sorrow, and despair ; like a cruel and insatiate vulture, which men permitted to tear out the hearts of their brethren, chained in the depths of dungeons. Year by year, its victims

were counted by the score and the hundred ; many of them mere debtors, and few of them proved guilty ; a grave and notable fact, slight it who will, if nations are answerable to God for the blood they shed ! Nor was the jail-fever alone ; the small-pox raged fiercely, and the malignity of every other form of disease was heightened ; the want of air, the damp vapours, the insufficient food, and other causes too many to recount, exaggerated every tendency to consumption, rheumatism, palsy, and other nameless ailments. He found that not only the body was delivered over, bound hand and foot, to pestilence and famine, but that every soul which entered those dens seemed literally committed for custody to the evil power. All the maladies which can infect a mind still partially pure, when villany recounts and gloats over its crimes, finding its only recreation in the exercise, spread their contagion there ; while drinking, swearing, gambling, and indecency, were the appropriate accompaniments and aids in the work. The jail-fever was not the worst enemy men encountered in a prison !

The cases of individual woe which Howard saw may be imagined, but cannot be detailed. They were such as might have wrung forth tears of blood. Pale and haggard faces on which the light had not looked until its glare pained the glazed and hollow eye, spirits broken, hearts hopeless, ghastly beings who had, long years ago, left all the paths where comfort encourages, and better prospects smile, however faintly, in the distance, and who now stood fronting mankind with fiendish scowl, in the gaunt defiance of despair ; men who, for small debts, after long years, died in prison ; fathers sustained in their dreary confinement by the families whose main support they had hitherto been, and several of whose younger members dropped at the time significantly into the grave ; women lying desolate, far from every friendly eye, from every cheering word, and dying of incurable disease ;

brother mortals driven mad by anguish, whose cries in their places of confinement attracted the passer-by. Such were the sights which, in the course of his various journeys over England and the world, John Howard saw. Had the time come for philanthropy?

Howard had not been long engaged in his work, ere the report of it reached the House of Commons. The House had been lately concerning itself with such things, and Howard was called to give evidence regarding what he had seen. His answers were deemed clear and satisfactory, and he formally received the thanks of the House. One Honourable Member, however, hearing of his long and expensive circuits, and finding the idea new to him that such things should be done without cash payment, begged to be informed whether he had travelled at his own expense. The man to whom the question was put was no sentimentalist, but that question touched him in the heart; indignation, and contempt, and the tears of outraged modesty, seem to have blended with scorn, as he spurned the unconscious compliment of Mammon.

In the course of the year 1774 two bills were passed: one abolished the injustice relating to the fees, the other had reference to the health of prisoners. Howard said nothing; but, in his own way, had them both printed at his expense, and sent one to every jailor in the kingdom.

About the close of the same year, he was requested to stand candidate for the borough of Bedford. He acceded to the request, and very narrowly missed his seat. He imputed his failure to Government influence; and, however this may have been, we learn from his words on the occasion, that he was by no means a man who concerned himself alone with village politics, or was harnessed to one idea. He had cast his eyes on the awakening motions of the great western giant, and boldly avowed his opposition to part of the policy adopted towards America. He also openly and emphatically declared

that, if elected, he would never accept of five shillings of emolument. He felt the loss of his seat somewhat deeply, but, as usual, resigned himself with calmness to the disposal of Providence.

Meanwhile, his peculiar work had not been abandoned. He set out for Scotland and Ireland, and prosecuted still farther his researches in England. He was just a month at home about the election business ; in noting his method of going about his work here, one hardly sees wherein his "energy" was specially "slow."

Having looked with his own eyes into the prisons of England, Scotland, and Ireland, he sat down, in the beginning of 1775, in his house at Cardington, to arrange his materials for the press, and offer to the world such suggestions as he now felt himself in a position to offer. But a thought struck him. There were other prisons in the world besides those of Britain ; on the Continent of Europe might not new miseries be seen, and might not valuable hints be obtained ? The fact was palpable ; but then it delayed the work, and was so tedious. Howard calmly laid aside his papers, got ready his travelling gear, and set out for the Continent. There was "slow" energy here ; and of a particularly valuable sort.

Howard's first journey in the inspection of Continental prisons lay through France, Holland, part of Flanders, Germany, and Switzerland. His researches were conducted in his usual way—quietly, quickly, thoroughly ; his sense of justice marking every abuse, his sagacity noting every excellence. He did not travel so far without seeing misery, and here again comfort and hope went along with him into many a dreary dungeon ; but the general glance at Continental prisons afforded revelations which redounded to the honour of the Continent, and to the shame of Britain. It is true that he did not gain access to the severest form of confinement in France ; his daring attempt to enter the Bastille was

foiled. It is true, likewise, that he did discover traces of torture such as were not known in England. But in cleanliness, order, and the general characteristic of being cared for, the Continental jails had the clear superiority. In Holland,—at that time, to all appearance, the most orderly and internally prosperous kingdom of Europe,—he saw in operation a system of management of criminals, in its main outlines, wise and humane. And the jail-fever existed only in Britain!

On returning from the Continent, he applied himself to the publication of his work on Prisons. His friends Aiken and Price assisted him in arranging his matter and securing literary correctness. The book was printed at Warrington. It was severe winter weather, yet Howard was always up by two in the morning, revising proof-sheets; at eight, he was at the printing-office, having just dressed for the day and breakfasted; here he remained till one, when the men went to dinner; he then retired to his adjoining lodgings, and taking in his hand some bread and raisins, or other dried fruit, generally walked for a little in the outskirts of the town, calling probably on a friend. The printers by this time had returned, and, proceeding to the printing-office, he continued there until work was over. Still untired, he went then to look over, with Aiken, the sheets put together by the latter during the day. His supper consisted of a cup of tea or coffee, and he retired to rest at ten or half-past ten.

The book published by Howard requires no comment. It is a type of his work; accurate, substantial, valuable, but devoid of everything allied, even most distantly, to adornment. It is rather a book of statistics than anything else, and as such there can be no doubt it was mainly regarded by himself: the facts of the case were wanted, and these he gave. It was published in 1777, and additions were made at several subsequent periods.

In the course of the same year, by the death of his sister, he inherited L.15,000. This addition to the means at his command he resolved to devote entirely to the prosecution of that task which he believed to have been appointed him by God. He knew his son to be amply provided for, even though his patrimonial estate was encroached upon ; but this enabled him to leave that estate untouched. Howard did his work not merely without cash payment ; he devoted to it every farthing he could conscientiously expend.

For several years now his course does not demand a detailed account. He went on calmly and indefatigably, ever widening the range of his excursions, and ever rendering more perfect what he had already done. Again and again he visited the prisons of England, Scotland, and Ireland ; again and again he swept over the Continent, the speed of his journeys equalled only by the thoroughness of his work. He had in every respect attained perfect adaptation to this last. By long and vigorous temperance, entire abstinence from animal food and intoxicating liquors, and a constant use of the bath, his early weakness of frame seems to have been exchanged for a considerable hardiness ; he inured himself to do without sleep to such an extent, that, on his journeys, one night in three, and that taken sometimes in his carriage, sufficed ; so simple was his fare, that he could, without boasting, profess himself able to subsist wherever men were to be found, wherever the earth yielded bread and water. The tourist in the Highlands of Scotland might have seen him stopping at the cabin by the wayside to obtain a little milk ; among the mountains of Sweden he pushed on, undaunted and tireless, living on sour bread and sour milk ; on the bleak plains of Russia, his lean and somewhat sallow face, and small spare figure, might have been marked as he dashed past in his light carriage ; he was on the high roads of France, in the mountain gorges of Switzerland, tossing on the Mediterranean or



the Adriatic. Never did he tarry, never did he haste, never was he moved from his deliberate and wakeful calmness. No personal duty was neglected. His son he always carefully remembered, having him near him at all needful and proper seasons, and diligently inquiring after the best instructors and guardians, to whose care to commit him. The little cottages of Cardington were not forgotten. These grew ever more numerous, and their inmates were well remembered : the work of alleviating the sorrow of the world did not prevent the little drops of comfort which had gladdened them while their kind landlord dwelt beside, from falling within them still. And wherever Howard was, it was impossible for men not to discern wherein lay the secret of his indefatigable perseverance, his unwavering valour, his perpetual calm. In whatever land he was, and amid whatever observers, he never forgot or hesitated to join in evening prayer with his attendant ; the door was shut, and the master and servant knelt down together, as if at home in quiet Cardington. For his own exertions, his one reason was, that he believed himself doing the will of God ; for the disposal of all events he trusted, with the simplicity of a little child, and the faith of a Hebrew patriarch, to the immediate power of Jehovah. He passes by contending armies ; we mark a shudder thrilling through his frame, but we see him also lift his eye upwards, and comfort himself with the knowledge that God is sitting King over the floods. He enters dungeons where others shrink back from the tainted air ; duty, he says, has sent him there, and Providence can preserve him. He is cast on a bed of pain and languor ; he bows submissive to the chastening hand of his Father, or bends his head, and asks wherefore He contendeth with him. Men look upon him with various feelings. The cold, the hard, the cruel, scorn his whole enterprise ; the worshippers of Mammon look on amazed, scarce finding heart to sneer ; gradually, from all

lands, there begins to rise a deep, earnest sound of approbation and acclaim. Howard hears neither sneers nor acclamations : he listens for the voice which seems to the world to be altogether silent.

As the eye follows him during these years, it is impossible not to discern a remarkable dexterity and adroitness in carrying through whatever business presents itself—a quick perception of what the case demands—a sure sagacity in providing against it—a ready adaptation to circumstances, and swift assumption of the character necessary for the occasion : all which it seems really difficult to reconcile with dulness.

Look at him, for instance, in that visit to Russia, in which he excited the interest, and was invited to the court, of Catharine.

Unbroken by the toils and hardships undergone in Sweden, where not even tolerable milk could be obtained to put into his unfailing tea, he arrives in the neighbourhood of St Petersburg. Forgetful of nothing, and conscious that his fame now goes before him, and is apt to interfere with his work, he leaves his carriage in the neighbourhood, and enters the town privately. The Empress, however, has her eye upon him, and sends a messenger to invite him to the palace. Here is clearly a call to the highest distinction and applause,—to become the observed of all observers,—in the smile of one whose smile secures that of all others. If there is observable weakness, even pardonable weakness, in his nature,—if the appearance of his work, in the eyes of men, does sensibly affect him,—here is a case for the quiet gratification of the hidden feeling, without the likelihood, nay, the possibility, of its being ever called in question. There are positive arguments, too, which seem plausible enough. The Empress may be won to a special interest in prisons ; philanthropy may kindle itself in the court ; what unconceived good may shape itself out therefrom is not to be measured. Howard looks into the invitation with his

cool, piercing English eye, flashing at once through all plausibilities into the heart of the matter ; he feels instinctively that his work is in the dungeon, and not the palace, and that to encircle it with a blaze of publicity will probably interfere with the positive rugged task he has appointed himself : he refuses the invitation.

Once in St Petersburg, he is soon at his work.

He has heard much of the humanity of the Russian criminal arrangements ; and, for one thing, it has been boasted to him that capital punishment is here abolished. His strong instinctive sagacity doubts the fact. But how attain a knowledge of the truth ? All authorities simply give the bland assurance that it is so ; the published codes bear witness to the same ; how can one get past what is said and seen, to be assured there is no discordance between that and the actual inner fact ? Howard hires a hackney coach, and drives to the house of the man who inflicts the knout. This first precaution is necessary to remove all appearance of being a stranger. He enters quickly, wearing a purpose-like, business-like look, as of one who is in the simple discharge of his duty. The man eyes him with astonishment, and somewhat of fear. Howard addresses him, soothingly but firmly ; no evil is intended towards *him* ; he has but to answer, clearly and at once, the questions about to be put. Howard's look is cool and adroit ; the Russian is all submission and complaisance : the colloquy commences :—"Can you inflict the knout in such a manner as to occasion death in a short time ?"—"Yes, I can." "In how short a time ?"—"In a day or two." "Have you ever so inflicted it ?"—"I have." "Have you lately ?"—"Yes ; the last man who was punished with my hands by the knout died of the punishment." "In what manner do you thus render it mortal ?"—"By one or more strokes on the sides, which carry off large pieces of flesh." "Do you receive orders thus to inflict the punish-

ment?"—"I do." The brief, soldier-like inquiry is completed; not a point has been omitted; Howard is satisfied, and departs. The elaborate cloaking of Russian policy, the infernal cruelty masked under the diabolic smile, has been penetrated by the simple, plain-looking Englishman, now approaching his sixtieth year.

While prosecuting his researches in St Petersburg, overcome by his exertions in Sweden, and affected probably by the climate, Howard is seized with the ague. He has no time to spare; his work waits at Moscow; he procures a light carriage, and sets out. The ague is still on him, but his strong spirit shakes it away; he travels it off. The journey to Moscow is five hundred miles; in less than five days he is there, his clothes having never been off since starting. He enters Moscow as calmly as if returning from a drive in the suburbs, and is instantly at his work. Such is the old man's way—"the dull, solid Howard."

Consider, again, that tour in France, when he was forbidden to pass the frontiers. The interdict is strict. He has seriously offended the French Court by plain truths, and researches not to be baulked. He ponders the circumstances with his usual calmness; duty seems to speak clearly; he resolves to enter France. He assumes the disguise of a physician—having formerly acquired some knowledge of medicine; adroitly escapes arrest in Paris; and on the streets of Toulon foots it trippingly as a French exquisite. He attains his object, and leaves France by sea. In the face of the French Government he has crossed the country, and made what observations seemed to him good. Whatever may be said of the achievement, it surely does not look like that of the mere shiftless mechanical workman.

In more private instances the case was similar. He visits the *Justitia* hulk. The captain brings him a biscuit as sample of the provisions: it is as wholesome as could be wished.

Howard puts it in his pocket. All necessary information seems to have been obtained, yet he lingers ; there is one on board who wishes he would take himself off. He has, in fact, been making observations in his own way ; his eyes are open as well as his ears. He remarks that things have a tawdry, disordered look, that the prisoners are sickly and tattered, that there are several things here which the captain's relation, so frankly given, does not embrace. Accordingly he waits. At length the messes are weighed out, Howard looking on quite calm, but with something of expectation in his face. Here come the biscuits ; they are in broken bits, green and mouldy ; there is no longer any mystery in the pallid looks of the crew. It is now Howard's turn to speak. Out starts the wholesome biscuit from his pocket ; it is held up, before captain and crew, beside the green loathsome fragments ; and Howard indignantly rebukes the former for his cruelty and falsehood. One can conceive the brightening of the eyes of the crew as they stand by in amazement. If you say Howard was slow and heavy, it might be well to mention how he could have done his work better : if it appears that he was a quick, indefatigable, effective worker, it might be well to consider to what extent biographic veils of dust and cobweb may hide the clear strong lines in the face of a man.

Howard was endowed with no very remarkable intellectual power. That in every mental exertion connected with words, that in everything relating to expression of thought or narration of action, he was naturally devoid of uncommon, perhaps even of ordinary, faculty, must be conceded : the only question which admits of discussion is, whether, in that power of action, that faculty of perceiving and doing the thing needful, with closed or stuttering lips, which has been recognised as characteristically English, he was not so far superior to the common run of men, that his title can be vindicated to a really high endowment ; whether, with what difference

soever, he was not cut from that same hard stratum of the Erzgebirge rock from which have come the silent Saxon Clives and Wellingtons. He himself estimated his powers very low. "I am the plodder," he said, "who goes about to collect material for men of genius to make use of." "How often," to use again his own humble words, "have we seen that important events have arisen from weak instruments!" Perhaps, for once, it was right in the human race to set among its honoured and immortal heroes one whose highest glory was his humility, whose greatest strength was his weakness. Yet it were a difficult thing to prove that he did not possess a high talent of the working order. Thurlow was much struck with the sagacity he displayed in an interview he had with him; when clearly set before the eye as they were done, and not as they have been narrated, his actions do not wear an aspect of slowness, dulness, or mere mechanical gyration; the work he had to do required not high intellectual power, but what it did require he fully displayed. Once only does he seem to have failed, or at least to have abandoned an attempt ere effecting the work proposed: he was appointed supervisor of certain penitentiary establishments which were to be erected, and after a time resigned the post. But here he was both hampered by interference, and restrained from the work which he deemed specially his own; perhaps resignation was the most decided, manly, and appropriate course open in the circumstances. What Howard might have been in action, had he in early life been placed in a conspicuous professional or political situation, it is bootless to inquire; yet, considering the long-sustained activity, the inevitable observation, the iron decision, the quick adroitness, which a survey of his career discovers, it is surely no safe assertion that he possessed by nature no power of work, define it as you will, which made him remarkable among men, and would have secured

him credit, if not fame, in whatever situation he had been placed.

Howard's last two journeys to the Continent claim a more particular notice than the others.

When he had been long engaged in the work of investigating the state of prisons, and that task had been approximately accomplished all over Europe, it became apparent to him that yet another service was appointed him. He had looked upon one great portion of the human race, which most men forget and despise ; he now turned to look upon another, whose claim upon their brethren is also negative rather than positive, who are held to their hearts solely by the chains of pity,—the sick and diseased of the human family. This other great dumb class was to find an advocate in Howard ; he aspired to perform the twofold angelic office of bringing hope to the prisoner and healing to the sick.

About this time, menacing Europe from the East, lying along its borders like the purple cloud which wraps the Samiel, the destroying pestilence, named by distinction the Plague, seems to have attracted special attention. That slight and sallow man, who had struggled his life-long with sickness, whose face was as that of a hermit in a wilderness, who was slow of speech, and upon whose head had now fallen the snows of nearly threescore winters, marked that Samiel-cloud from afar. He saw it coming slowly, resistlessly on, strewing its way with pallid corpses, taking the smile from off the faces of the nations. He thought it possible that, by entering its shade, he might learn the secret of its baneful energy, and save some of his fellow-creatures from its power. He thought he heard the voice of his God bidding him go ; he looked calmly from his quiet island-home towards Asia and the *Ægean*, and went. Other diseases were to meet him on the way,—the lazar-houses of Europe were embraced in his enterprise ; but the Plague, like the monarch of the baleful

host, was the ultimate, and gradually the principal foe with which the weak Howard was to contend.

Passing over the previous stages of his journey, we find him, in the summer of 1786, in Constantinople. Here he visited the hospitals and lazarettos, every den and stronghold of the plague. As he entered, a pain smote him across the forehead, continuing for an hour after he left ; his conductors drew back in fear ; he saw what was oppressive to soul and sense ; yet he never flinched,—never abandoned that calm, heaven-lit look, which nought on earth could darken or abash,—never stopped till his task was done.

This once accomplished, he prepared to return to Vienna. But he paused ; a thought had struck him,—he could not proceed. The prison-world he had entered solely as a visitor ; in no other capacity was there a possibility of his doing so. But was not the case altered here ? Was there not a way of learning the secrets of lazarettos more thorough than that of mere inspection and hearsay ? There was, and Howard saw it. Yet the condition was stern. It was, that he should enter a lazaretto, and, confined himself, learn, beyond possibility of deception, the state and feelings of its inmates. The old man deliberately accepted the condition, and proceeded to enter a lazaretto. From Constantinople he sailed for Smyrna, chose there a vessel with a foul bill of health, and departed for Venice. On leaving the Morea, where the vessel took in water, they were borne down upon by a Tunisian pirate, and a fight ensued. To the astonishment of the crew, Howard stood by perfectly calm. At length the pirate seemed about to prevail. As a last resort, the Turks loaded their largest cannon to the muzzle with nails, spikes, and what destructive missiles could be found. Howard stepped forward, seeing probably that the men mismanaged the matter, and coolly pointed the gun on the enemy's deck ; the volley burst forth, carrying death among their crew ; as the smoke rolled along



the sea, the pirate was seen hoisting sail, and bearing away. The voyage proved long and stormy. For two months Howard was tossed about alone in wild, dangerous weather; yet he bore a brave heart through it all. "I well remember," he says, "I had a good night, when, one evening, my cabin-biscuits, &c., were floated with water; and, thinking I should be some hours in drying it up, I went to bed to forget it."

Arriving at Venice, he found he had to spend two months in the lazaretto. He was first put into a loathsome room, "without table, chair, or bed," and swarming with vermin. He hired a person to cleanse it, and the operation occupied two days, yet it remained offensive; headache, caused by the tainted air and infected walls, perpetually tormented him. From his first apartment he was, after some time, removed to another as bad as the former. Here, in the division of the apartment where he was to sleep, he was "almost surrounded with water," and found a dry spot on which to fix his bed only by kindling a large fire on the flags. Six days he remained in the new quarter. Once more he was removed, and this time there appeared at least a possibility of improvement. His new apartment was, indeed, unfurnished, filthy, and "as offensive as the sick-wards of the worst hospitals." But the water and the vermin seem to have disappeared. The rooms, however, were full of contagion, for they had not been cleaned from time immemorial; and though Howard had them washed again and again with warm water, he found his appetite failing, and a slow fever beginning to fasten upon him. But he was on no theatrical mission, and would die at his post only when all remedy failed him. Here, again, we meet the difficulties of the theory touching his slow and shiftless dulness. With the aid of the English consul, he obtained brushes and lime; his attendant—for a consideration—assisted him in manufacturing whitewash; despite the prejudices of the observers, he rose up three hours before his

guard, and commenced, along with his former assistant, to whitewash his apartment. He resolved to lock up his guard if he interfered : one is almost sorry the man did not, for Howard would have kept to his determination. All who passed by looked with astonishment at the whitened and wholesome walls, where so many had been contented to pine and repine, with no attempt at cure.

The days in the Venice lazaretto rolled slowly on, wearisome, dismal, unvarying ; Howard watched everything, knew everything, and felt the weariness he longed to relieve. His faith failed not ; with calm and easy feelings he looked forward to the term of his confinement. But suddenly there came a change : darker clouds than had ever yet cast their shadow over him took their course towards that dreary lazaretto. On the 11th of October 1786, he received letters from England, with two pieces of information. The one was, that his son was following evil courses, and dashing wildly on in a path whose end, dimly indicated to the father, must be one of the deepest darkness : the other, that a movement was proceeding in England, under high and promising auspices, for the erection of a monument to himself. Not hearing, at first, the worst concerning his son, he wrote home with deep sorrow, yet in hope. The proposal for a monument next required his attention. An English gentleman had formerly had an interview with Howard at Rome of an hour's length, and the result was an admiration on the part of the former which knew no bounds. On his return to England, he had proposed, through the columns of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, that a public monument should be erected to one whom he styled "the most truly glorious of human beings." The wide-spread and profound admiration for Howard which, ere this time, had sunk into the British mind, had thus found vent ; the proposal had at once taken effect, and the movement was headed by certain noblemen.

With astonishment it was heard that Howard wrote absolutely refusing the honour, and alleging that the idea of it gave him exquisite pain. At first this was thought a graceful mode of acceptance, or at least a struggle of excessive modesty, easily to be overborne; but the fact was soon put beyond dispute. Even after long arguing and urging by intimate and honoured friends, he decidedly and unalterably refused. From the lazaretto of Venice he wrote to his friend Mr Smith of Bedford, rehearsing the directions he had given, ere quitting Cardington, respecting his obsequies; his words were these, copied now with no alteration, and with no comment:—

“(a) As to my burial, not to exceed ten pounds.

“(b) My tomb to be a plain slip of marble, placed under that of my dear Henrietta's in Cardington Church, with this inscription:—

“ ‘ John Howard, died —, aged —.

My hope is in Christ.’ ”

Some time after, in grateful and courteous terms, he signified to his well-wishers in England that his resolution was fixed, and that he would accept no public mark of approbation.

Let this fact be candidly weighed; and let it then be said whether what has been alleged regarding Howard's grand motive in his work is other than the bare and faintly-expressed truth. For himself he would have no glory. *He* accept honour from men, who was the weakest of instruments, and whose highest honour it was that he was worthy to be made an instrument at all in the hand of God! *He* stop to be crowned by men, whom the Almighty had honoured with His high command, and permitted to give strength and comfort for Him! *He* listen to the applause of the nations, whom his inmost heart knew to be weak and unworthy, and whose inspiring and indestructible hope it was, that he might be numbered even among the least in the kingdom of heaven! The people seemed in loud acclaim to say, Thou hast brought

us water out of the rock : Howard, with eager face, and outstretched hand, and heart pained to the quick, cried out, I have done nothing, I deserve nothing ; God has done all.

Released from the lazaretto, and after spending a week in Venice, Howard proceeded by sea to Trieste, and thence to Vienna. During this time, the fever he had escaped for a time continued to creep over him, the whole air of the lazaretto having been infected : it greatly impaired his strength ; and the accounts, deepening in sadness, which reached him respecting his son, made his affliction almost too heavy to bear :—"I am reduced by fatigue of body and mind ; I have great reason to bless God my resolution does not forsake me in so many solitary hours." It did not forsake him ; it remained firm as a rock in vexed surge, that could ever raise its head into the pure light of God's smile ; but human faith has not often been so sorely tried. In the letter written from Vienna, from which the above words are taken, he referred in approving terms to the conduct towards his son of several domestics whom he had left at Cardington, expressed his persuasion that it arose out of regard to his mother, and concluded the paragraph in these words :—"Who, I rejoice, is *dead*." He often thought of Harriet ; and we may conceive that now, in his extreme sorrow, the old days would flit past him robed in the still and melancholy light of memory ; that tender, and to him beautiful wife, seemed to return to lean over him in his loneliness and sickness of heart ; but he thought of his son, and the tear which started to his own eye was transferred by imagination to that of his Harriet, where perchance he had never seen one before ; then love arose and triumphed over anguish, and he blessed God that his best beloved was lying still. Has art ever surpassed the pathos of those words ?

Early in 1787 Howard was again in England, proceeding to make arrangements respecting his son. The latter was a

hopeless maniac. He appears to have been of that common class of young men whom strong passions, weak judgment, and good-natured, silly facility, render a prey to those who combine artfulness with vice. A servant in whom Howard placed absolute confidence betrayed his trust infamously, allured his charge into evil, and excited in his breast contempt for his father. That father, ever most anxious to provide him the best and safest superintendence and tuition, had sent him to prosecute his education at Edinburgh, where he resided with Dr Black. There it was that prolonged habits of vice fatally impaired his constitution, and after a period he became deranged. In this condition, watched over with all the care and kindness which his father's efforts could secure, he lingered for a considerable number of years, and died. It was a touching case ; for he seems not to have been without that gleam of nobleness which so often accompanies and adorns a character not intellectually strong. In Edinburgh once, when some one spoke disrespectfully of his father, and basely hinted that his philanthropic expenses might impair the fortunes of his son, young Howard indignantly resented the insinuation, and asked how he could ever do so much good with the money as his father.

Howard now remained in England for about two years, seeing his son provided for as well as was possible, and preparing the result of his travels for the press. His religion still continued to deepen and to grow more fervent ; the feeling of the littleness of his efforts and powers to increase. The few private memoranda that remain of the period breathe an earnest and habitual devotion ; there is in them an occasional flash of clear intellectual insight and moral ardour ; but, most of all, they are characterized by humility. "Examples of tremendous wrath will be held up, and what if I should be among these examples!" "Behold, I am vile ; what shall I answer Thee, oh my God ! I have no claim on Thy bounty

but what springs from the benignity of Thy nature. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ." "A few of God's people that met in an upper room appear, in my eye, greater than all the Roman empire. God kept them." "Where there is most holiness, there is most humility. Never does our understanding shine more than when it is employed in religion. In certain circumstances retirement is criminal ; with a holy fire I would proceed." "Ease, affluence, and honours, are temptations which the *world* holds out ; but, remember, ' the fashion of this world passeth away : ' on the other hand, fatigue, poverty, sufferings, and dangers, with an approving conscience. Oh God ! my heart is fixed, trusting in Thee ! *My God !* Oh glorious words ! there is a treasure, in comparison of which all things in this world are dross."

England was now for Howard all hung as it were in weeds of mourning. The hope to which he had clung that his son might cheer him in his old age had vanished utterly ; or at least the term when such might be possible could not be fixed. There were probably in this world few sadder hearts at that time than John Howard's. But he had not yet discovered the secret of the plague ; there was still work for mercy to do : it was now perhaps the greatest happiness of which he was capable to go upon that work. And he went ; the weary heart, to soothe and heal the weary-hearted ; one of the saddest men in England, to meet the plague.

On the 27th of September 1789, he was at Moscow. He seemed now to feel that his end was not far ; and we find him engaged in solemn transactions with his God. He brought out that old dedication of himself to his Maker, which we saw him subscribe in the days when his life had first been darkened, and when the terrors of the Almighty, which had rolled like low cloudy masses over his soul, were becoming suffused with celestial radiance in the full beaming out of the Sun of

Righteousness. Again he owned his entire unworthiness and his entire weakness ; again he looked up to the Rock of Ages ; again he gave himself up, soul, spirit, and body, for ever and ever, to God. As we gather, too, from the pages of Brown, he looked again on that covenant which his wife had made with her Father in heaven : one can see the old and weary man gazing over its lines, while a tear steals from his eye, a tear of lonely sadness, yet touched with one gleam of light, from the thought that it will not now be long ere he again meet his Harriet. This was in the September of 1789 : it was his last pause on his hard life-journey, his last draught of living waters from those fountains which Divine Love never permits to dry up in the desert of the world : again he arose and went on his way ; but now the pearly gates and the golden walls stood before the eye of faith, calm, beautiful, eternal, on the near horizon.

In the beginning of January 1790, he was residing at Kherson, a village on the Dnieper, near the Crimea, still, as of old, with indefatigable resolution and kindness pursuing his work. In visiting a young lady dying of a fever the infection seized him, and he soon felt that death was upon him. On his death-bed he was what we have always known him. We hear the voice of prayer for his son, of inextinguishable pity for the afflicted, and, concerning himself, these words, addressed to his friend Admiral Priestman—"Let me beg of you, as you value your old friend, not to suffer any pomp to be used at my funeral, nor any monument nor monumental inscription whatsoever, to mark where I am laid : but lay me quietly in the earth, place a sun-dial over my grave, and let me be forgotten." Thus, with the same calm, saintly smile, so still but so immoveable, which he had worn during life, he passed away.

All nations had now heard of Howard, and all nations honoured him. England, in silent pride, placed his statue in

St Paul's Cathedral. There he remained unmoved, and his name more and more became a word of love and of admiration in the households of the world. Burke spoke of him in his own burning and majestic terms; Foster pointed to him as one cased in an iron mail of resolution such as made him a wonder among the sons of men; Chalmers responded to his nobleness with the tameless enthusiasm of that royal heart. But in our day a mighty hand has been stretched forth to drag him from his seat among the immortal ones of time: one, of perhaps more wondrous genius, and in some sense of more penetrating intellectual glance, than either Chalmers, Burke, or Foster, has flung quiet but remorseless scorn on Howard. That one is Thomas Carlyle. It is unnecessary to quote his words: those which seem to approach nearest to positive misconception and injustice have been already set before the reader. They are well known, occurring in the celebrated pamphlet on Model Prisons. It can be stated in a word or two what Mr Carlyle has seen, and what, making appeal to readers, it may without presumption be said that he has not seen, in Howard. He has seen regarding him that of which he appears, in all cases, to possess a more vivid perception than any writer of past or present times—the intellectual type and calibre. Doubts may be entertained whether a strong case might not be made out in defence even here, if the difference between working and talking talent were accurately defined, and the dulness of biographers taken fully into account. But I care not to urge this consideration on behalf of Howard. I claim for him no intellectual glory. I concede that, if Mr Carlyle does not impute to him any vulgar motive, of desire to make an appearance, or the like,—and I leave readers to judge whether such an impression is, or is not, conveyed by the words cited,—there is nothing which he says concerning him demonstrably false. Say that his highest talents were “English ve-



“rarity, solidity, simplicity;” believe him even to have been (if you can, for I positively cannot) “dull, and even dreary;” still, I ask, is his highest praise the words, so severely qualified by the spirit of the context, “the modest, noble Howard?” Let any one look along that life, calmly figuring it to himself, pondering it till he knows its real meaning and vital principle, and say whether there burns not through it, however veiled from the general eye, a sublime, an immortal radiance. Let him say whether we cannot utter, with peculiar emphasis and veneration, these words, “The Holy Howard.” It is in this that his claim to be honoured by men consists;—that he was honoured by God to live nearer to Himself than any but a chosen few of the human race.

And is it not a reasonable and equitable claim? Is it for ever to be impossible for a man to be honoured of men unless his intellectual power is great? That were surely hard; surely essential equality were thus denied me as a man; surely I could not so be calmly content under this sun. If our relation to the Infinite is of that nature which Christ has unfolded, it cannot be so. If, from the seraphim who receive the light of the throne on their white robes, to the poor widow who kneels by her husband’s corpse, and bows her head to the God who has given and taken away, we are but servants of one Master, soldiers of one host, members of one family, it cannot be so. For then the highest honour of the archangel and of the child is, that he does, well and gladly, and giving God the glory, what Gods bids him do. And methinks it is best even so. We will honour the old soldier, whose name we have never heard, but who at eventide contentedly wound the colours round his heart and died for the good cause, as much as we honour the Cromwell who led that cause to the pinnacles of the world; ay, and without refusing to obey Cromwell either, without losing one atom of the real worth and value of so-called

“hero-worship.” The angel who ministers to a dying beggar may hold himself as highly honoured as he who keeps the gate of heaven.

Howard showed to all men how the weakest do their work in God’s army ; he exhibited, with a strange revealing power, how, were men unfallen, every order of intellectual faculty might be employed to its full extent, but with equal merit, that is, with none, and with equal reward, that is, the free smiling of God’s countenance. Despise him who will on earth, in heaven Isaac Newton does not look with scorn on John Howard ! Is not the special honouring of intellectual greatness, nay, the special honouring of any human being, an effect of the fall ? Is it not the true attitude of all the finite to look *around* with love on their brethren, but with undivided gaze to look *upwards* to God ? It would seem assuredly to be so ; and that we now rightly honour our great ones merely because we must fix our poor eyes so steadfastly on them, while, commissioned by God, they lead us onwards towards the eternal light.

Howard is almost alone among those whom men have agreed to honour. They are the intellectually mighty who, by that necessity of our position just glanced at, become best known. Thousands there may be, and there always are, whose lives are “faithful prayers,” who would, with grateful joy, suffer anything for the sake of Christ. But Howard was separated by God for a work which could not but attract attention ; an arduous and a heroic work, for which the time had fully come in the history of the world. For that work he was qualified, and it, with absolute thoroughness, he did. Money was as nothing in his estimation in comparison of it ; but he was as far above fame as money, and no danger or toil could daunt him : “cholera doctors” Mr Carlyle compares to him, but he went where hired doctors would not go ; and what cholera doctor, what man among men, ever

went for two months into solitary confinement, amid infection and all discomfort, if perchance he might bring thence one drop of balm for the sorrowful ? Then consider his humility : Ah ! surely Howard was one of the men who might have been left on his pedestal. Think how he would himself have met Mr Carlyle's scorn. "It is true," he would have said ; "such I was, if so good ; I was nothing. Go into your great cathedral, and from the midst of your venerated dead cast forth the statue of John Howard ; let a white tablet alone recall my memory, and place it beside that of my Henrietta." Howard never asked his fame ; in his life he would accept no votive wreath : whatever had been said of his followers, regarding him one might have expected silence. In a very extended sense, his fame was unsolicited. Not only was himself slow of speech, but his biographers were such as has been said. Yet the inarticulate human instinct discerned that there was around him that beauty of holiness which, in the eyes of God and of angels, is alone honourable, and which it is well for men to honour, and placed him in the pantheon of the world. That human instinct was right ; there surely he will remain. Look not for him among the high intellectual thrones, among earth's sages or poets, among earth's kings or conquerors. But yonder, among the few lowly yet immortal ones whose fame has been endorsed in heaven, see John Howard. His image is formed of marble, pure as the everlasting snow : away from it, as if desecrating its whiteness, fall the robes of false adornment in which men have sought to envelop it ; away also fall all dimming, defacing, distorting veils of misconception ; and there beams out clearly the face of a simple, humble man, earnest of purpose, celestially calm, and with one tear of inexpressible love on the cheek ; from the heavens comes a viewless hand, encircling the head with a serene and saintly halo, its mild radiance falling over the face, and blending with its speechless

human pity ; the eye is fixed on the eternal mansions, and the lips seem ever, in humble and tremulous gratitude, to say, " Lord God, why me ?" The outline and features of that face Mr Carlyle saw, but that halo, and the fixedness of that heavenward gaze, he did not see.

## WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

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WILLIAM WILBERFORCE was born in Hull, in August 1759. The auspices of his birth were in important respects favourable : a first glance reveals no exception or abatement to their benignity. Of a wealthy and ancient family, he opened his eyes on a life-path paved by affluence, and thick-strewn with the flowers of indulgence. Every influence around him was of comfort and kindness ; wherever his young eye fell, it met a smile. And his own nature was such as to make him peculiarly susceptible of the delights around. He was, it is true, a tender and delicate child, small for his age, and in no respect of promising appearance ; but there was in his heart an irrepressible fountain of kind and guileless vivacity ; his voice was of sweet silvery tone ; he was gentle and considerate in his ways : altogether, he was a brisk, mildly-spirited, fascinating little thing, who could centre in himself every ray of encircling kindness and comfort, and enhance his enjoyment by radiating out smiles of happy contentment on those around him. All this was well ; perhaps a happier sphere could scarce be imagined ; yet it cannot be pronounced in the highest sense auspicious, because there was wanting in it any high presiding influence of character. The boy's eye could rest on no clear, earnest light of godliness, burning in his

father's house ; his parents were conventionally excellent people, respectable, cheerful, hospitable, gay ; nothing better or worse.

In 1768, the father of Wilberforce died : the latter inherited a rich patrimony, which was afterwards increased. The child, now nine years old, was sent to reside with an uncle, living by turns at Wimbledon and St James's Place. Under his roof he came within the sphere of earnest piety. His aunt was one of those unnoticed witnesses to the inextinguishable power of vital Christianity, whose light, kindled by the instrumentality of Whitefield, spread a gentle but precious radiance through the spiritual haze of last century. Under her influence his mind was roused to a new earnestness, and turned with great force in a religious direction. At the age of twelve he wrote such letters on religious subjects as were afterwards deemed by some worthy of publication ; and, though this was wisely prevented, the fact is a proof that his boyish intellect was brought into earnest and protracted consideration of religious truth.

This state of matters was abruptly changed. His mother took the alarm. The prospect that her son should become a canting Methodist was appalling. She immediately recalled him to Yorkshire, and commenced the process of erasing every mark of individual character, of softening down into mere insipidity and commonplace every trait of personal godliness which had appeared. He was at once inaugurated in a course of systematic triviality, not to end until it was fatally too late, whose grand object was to clothe him in the garb of harmless, respectable frivolity, and leave him at last converted into that aimless worshipper of the hour, that lukewarm trimmer between all—in religion, literature, philosophy, and feeling—which is either cold or hot ; that weathercock of vacant mode ; that all-embracing cypher of the conventional—a man of the world.

His name threw open to him, on his return from London, every circle of fashion in Hull. Though still so young, he was introduced into all sorts of gay society. At first his lately-gained principles offered a firm opposition. The loud, half-animal existence of the hearty, hospitable magnates of Hull, contrasted boldly and unfavourably with the religious earnestness of his aunt's life. The fashion was to have dinner parties at two and sumptuous suppers at six, the enjoyment having evidently a close and important connection with the eating and drinking. Of card-parties, dancing, and theatre-going, there was no end. In all this he found at first no pleasure: he turned in aversion from the coarse stimulants of sense, and sighed for the pure and lofty region he had left. But he was still a mere boy. The kindness universally showered on him could not be received with indifference by his warm and impressible nature; his was the age when new habits can yet be formed, and the process still result in charm; worst of all, he perceived that his sprightliness and musical powers enabled him already to diffuse joy around him. The man who can fascinate society is he who of all others is most subject to its fascination. The boy Wilberforce soon participated with joyous sympathy in all the merry-making of Hull.

All this is deeply to be regretted. There is, of course, no harm in the healthful gaiety of youth. The exuberant strength of boyhood rightly prefers the open field to the close school-room, the athletic sport or joyous dance to the demure and measured walk. A strong mental endowment will, it is true, in most, if not in all cases, evince itself by an element of thoughtfulness in early youth; but it is ever a circumstance of evil omen, boding intellectual disease, when the thoughtfulness of boyhood is of power sufficient to overbear its animal vivacity and sportive strength. One thing, however, is ever to be borne in mind touching amusement and its connection with education: it cannot be the whole, but a part; it must

derive its zest from being the unstringing of the bow. In the case of Wilberforce, it cannot be doubted that it usurped a place by no means its due,—a place where its influence was one of almost unmixed evil. And his natural temper and disposition were precisely such as rendered this circumstance dangerous. His mind was of a sensitive, impulsive, lively cast, taking quickly the hue of its environment, and perhaps originally deficient in self-determining strength. To discipline his restless energy, to concentrate his volatile faculties, a firm though kind, a calm and methodic though genial training, was required. Instead of this, he was, from early boyhood, the pet of gay circles, where no serious word was spoken, and found himself reaping most abundantly the approbation of his mother, when he flung all earnest thought aside, gave the odds and ends of his time to study, and made it the business of his life to be a dashing, lively, engaging member of fashionable society. That which occupied the formal place of instruction was the tuition of a clerical gentleman who kept an academy. While residing with him, the main part of Wilberforce's education was what intellectual aliment he could gather at the tables of fox-hunting squires and jovial county gentlemen ; and we can conceive the effect upon the now faint religious impressions of the boy, of the spectacle of a man set apart to preach the gospel, whose whole life was a gentlemanly sneer at the spirituality of his office. Ere he proceeded to enter the university, which he did when seventeen years of age, every trace of his early earnestness had been effaced. In all that related to the external qualities of a young man of fashion, his training had been amply successful. His manners were the happy union of sprightliness, ease, and unaffected kindness ; his faculties were acute, his sympathy warm and vivacious, his wit ready and genial ; he sung with grace and sweetness.

Furnished thus upon entering the university, it is scarce



to be wondered at that his sojourn there was well-nigh barren of good ; it were perhaps more correct to say, that it was fertile in evil. His character was not, indeed, contaminated by any taint of downright vice : the nature of Wilberforce was always too healthful, too open, free, and sunny for that. But the volatility which naturally characterized him, and whose final triumph, promoted by the studied frivolity of his boyhood, might yet have been averted, was now pampered to fresh luxuriance, and left to spread itself over his mind. The acquisition of the power of sustained and earnest study was neglected. The opportunity of that first introduction to the treasures of the knowledge of the world, which so generally determines the extent to which these treasures are afterwards availed of, was lost. At St John's College, Cambridge, he fell among a set of the most pleasant, good-humoured, hearty fellows in the world. He had lots of money, of temper, of briskness, of wit ; they had free, jovial ways,—didn't mind telling a good fellow what were his good points,—could study themselves, but could not perceive why a man of fortune should work,—could probably tell a good story, give and take a repartee, appreciate a song, or sing one,—last of all, and without any question, had the best appetite for good wine and Yorkshire pie. And so Wilberforce, whose natural quickness enabled him to figure to sufficient advantage at examinations, left study to the poor and the dull : enough for him to be the centre of a joyous and boisterous throng, every good thing he said telling capitally, every face around the board raying forth on him smiles and thankful complacency, the hours dancing cheerfully by, and casting no look behind to remind him that they were gone for ever.

“ The sick in body call for aid ; the sick  
In mind are covetous of more disease.”

Those men of St John's College, Cambridge, had the best feelings towards Wilberforce, and seemed to him his truest

friends. If you had spoken of him to any of them, you would have heard nothing but affectionate praise, with possibly just the slightest caustic mixture of contemptuous pity; if in their presence you had called him a fool, or struck him on the face, a score of tongues or arms would have moved to defend him. Yet how well had it been for Wilberforce if some rough but kind-hearted class-fellow had turned upon him, like that class-fellow who saved Paley to British literature, and told him roundly he was a trifling fool! How well for him had his dancing-boots been exchanged for Johnson's gaping shoes, his Yorkshire pie for Heyne's boiled pease-cods! With bitter emphasis would he have assented to this in latter days, when he looked back on this time with keen anguish, and said that those who should have seen to his instruction, acted towards him unlike Christian, or even honest men. But such reflections were now in the distance. Fanned by soft adulation, his heart told him he was a clever fellow, who would carry all before him: for the present, he would sing his song, and shuffle the cards, and enjoy all the pleasure he imparted. So it continued until he approached the season of his majority, and it became proper to choose a vocation for life.

Disinclined to mercantile pursuits, he withdrew from the business of which he was at his majority to have become a partner, and turned to another profession; one which may be deemed of some importance,—that of member of the British House of Commons. To be one of the governing council of the British empire, to adjudicate on the affairs of that considerable assemblage of millions, to lend a helping voice and hand to steer the British monarchy in such an era as ours, that it may ever have its head forward, avoiding collisions, and sunken rocks, and quicksands, may be thought a task of some difficulty and solemnity. The instinct of British honour revolts at the idea of its being made a trade: no salaried Members, were your legislators for ever confined to a

class in consequence ; but there is no such prevailing abhorrence against its being made an amusement. Accordingly, it is one of what may be styled the hereditary recreations of the British opulent and aristocratic classes ; perhaps of a somewhat higher and more imposing order than fox-hunting and grouse-shooting ; having, in particular, the advantage of serving as a background to these, giving them a look of relaxation in the eyes of the world, imparting to their enjoyment a fine zest, and freeing them of all ennui or monotony. Young Wilberforce, whom we have been observing, and of whose education for this profession we can judge, thought that to be an honourable Member would just suit him. He had, indeed, received a good average training for the business. Quick to acquire, he had secured a fair amount of classical knowledge, and in those vital particulars, suavity of manners, happy fluency of speech, engaging deportment, he was surpassed by none ; the old gaities of Hull, the Olympian suppers of St John's, and an excellent musical talent, would probably set him high among young honourable Members. Besides, he would spend the last year of his minority in London ; in feasting and addressing a number of Hull freemen who lived there, he might make advances in the stiff old art of ruling men ; while his evenings would be spent in actual apprenticeship to his business by attending the gallery of the House. All this was done ; the Member of the British Parliament deemed himself fully equipped. Immediately on becoming of age, Wilberforce was elected by an overwhelming majority for the city of Hull. His seat cost him between L.8000 and L.9000.

Returned by such a constituency, and in such a manner, and on terms of personal intimacy with Pitt, who had been a Cambridge acquaintance, and whom he had met in the gallery of the House, Wilberforce found honourable membership a most easy and animated affair. Acting as background, in

the way that has been indicated, it threw out finely the foreground of fun and frolic, of sport and light joyance, of feast, and dance, and merriment, which formed the principal portion of his existence. At the clubs he was received with cheerful welcome ; there, with the men in whose hands were, or were soon to be, the destinies of the British nation, he laughed, and chatted, and sung, and gambled. His winnings were once or twice a hundred pounds, and, happening, on one occasion, from an unforeseen circumstance, to keep the bank, he cleared six hundred. But here, as always on the verge of sheer vice, his better nature checked him ; what would have stamped a man of radical baseness an irretrievable gambler, pained and shocked Wilberforce : he played no more. There was no abatement of any of the other pleasures. " Fox, Sheridan, Fitzpatrick, and all your leading men," frequented those clubs ; Pitt showed himself there as the wittiest of the witty ; altogether, the spectacle presented by British statesmen behind the scenes was one of mirth and exhilaration. Gay, boisterous, frivolous they were ; not devoid of a certain earnestness and business-like expertness when at their work, yet sportive and light of heart, as men whose places were safe, and who, for the rest, had only the matters of a British empire to think of. Wilberforce was by no means a technically inactive member ; he presented to the eye of the world an unimpeachable aspect, and kept his conscience quiet. Seeming, to himself and others, to be doing his whole duty, he was satisfied and happy. Glancing, with his quick, clear eye, into circle after circle—lighting up all faces by the gentle might of his wit, if not with uncontrollable mirth, yet with soft, comfortable smiles—suiting himself, by a tact swift and sudden as magic, to the society or subject of the moment—gesticulating and mimicking with rare histrionic art—pouring forth, in unbroken stream, a warm and glowing eloquence—or gliding softly into one of those songs to which

his rich voice lent witching charms—he was the life and soul of supper parties, the caressed of fashionable circles, the darling of the clubs. The Prince of Wales praised his singing ; could human ambition look higher than that ?

After some more Parliamentary work of this nature, Wilberforce flits gaily across the Channel ; we find him in the autumn of 1783, with his friends Pitt and Elliot, in the French capital. It is strangely interesting to mark him as he flutters among the Vauxhall luminaries of the old French court ; light and frivolous almost as they, yet with an open eye, and an English shrewdness, which note well the salient points of the dream-like scene. His jottings are brief but suggestive :—“ Supped at Count Donson’s. Round table : all English but Donson. Noailles, Dupont. Queen came after supper. Cards, tric-trac, and backgammon, which Artois, Lauzun, and Chartres played extremely well.” This was that Artois who goes down to a fool’s immortality as the inventor or possessor of those “ breeches of a kind new in this world,” into which, and from which, his four tall lackeys lifted him every morning and evening ; and this Chartres, who distinguished himself at tric-trac, became Egalité, and found it more difficult to play another game. Had the curtain of the future been drawn aside for a moment before the eyes of the group, and Philip of Orleans seen himself at that moment when he stopped before his own palace on his way to the guillotine, what astonishment, and trembling, and dismay would have sunk over that gay company ! He sees La Fayette, too, and styles him “ a pleasing, enthusiastical man,” surely with happy shrewdness and accuracy. The latter is already a patriot of the most highflown description, on the model of Addison’s Cato. The ladies of the court try to induce him to join in cards ; but will the classic hero compromise the austere dignity of freedom ? The ladies have to glide away in admiring respect, almost in reverence, and

the heart of the patriot is strengthened. "The king is so strange a being (of the hog kind), that it is worth going a hundred miles for the sight of him, especially a boar-hunting." This was poor Louis, whose contribution to human knowledge was of so decidedly negative a character; who bore testimony to this one doctrine; whose worth, however, deserved to be written in blood; that nature, in this world, grants painfully little to good intentions. He sees Marie Antoinette frequently, and bears witness to the gentle witchery of her manner, queenly dignity blended with feminine kindness. Seen against the darkness which we know lay in the background, all this gaily-tinted picture, of which Wilberforce for a short space formed an appropriate figure, has a strange and fascinating look. "Light mortals, how ye walk your light life-minuet, over bottomless abysses, divided from you by a film!"

In the spring of 1784 Wilberforce was elected to represent Yorkshire. His popularity in his native county was extreme; and when, after the prorogation of Parliament, he went down to spend his birth-day there, and appeared at the races, the whole era of his history which we now contemplate may be said to have reached its highest manifestation and climax. A running chorus of applauding shouts followed his path; he was the cynosure of all eyes; if vacant stare and noise could make one happy, he were the man.

In October 1784 he left England on a journey to the Continent, in the company of Isaac Milner, brother of the Church historian, and, though unapt to show them, of thoroughly evangelical views. A few serious words which dropped from Milner's lips on the journey, and the effect of a perusal of Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," did not altogether pass away from the mind of Wilberforce; invisibly, perhaps intermittently, yet indestructibly, the disturbing influence acted within. On his return to London, he again

rushed into the halls of fashion and frivolity ; now and then a monition of other things flickered momentarily, like the glance of an angel's eye, across his sphere of vision ; but he still continued, with reckless determination, to drain the chalice of wild, unmeasured mirth. No change was seen in the external aspect of his life ; he frisked about at Almack's, danced till five in the morning, charmed and fascinated as before ; yet the monitory glance was at intervals upon him, the perfect peace of death was broken.

In the summer of 1785 he had another Continental tour with Milner. They now conversed more earnestly on the subject of religion, and commenced together the study of the New Testament. The time at length had come from which Wilberforce was to date a new era in his life : the time when he was, whether in delusion or not, to believe himself savingly influenced by the Spirit of the Almighty, and to prepare to walk onwards to eternity under that guidance.

The manner of the change wrought in Wilberforce is of less importance to us than its effects ; but its general aspect must be briefly indicated. It appears highly probable that the religious influence by which we saw him impressed in boyhood never totally lost its effect. Like an ineffaceable writing, it lay in his heart during all those years when the desert sands of vanity swept over it, hidden, perhaps forgotten, but imperishably there : it required but a calm hour and a strong skilful hand, putting aside the sand and revealing the golden characters, to bring the soul of Wilberforce to acknowledge their sacred authority. On this point, however, it is unnecessary to insist ; the matter is, in fact, beyond the reach of positive evidence. He did, at all events, now pause in startled earnestness ; the fleeting monitions could no longer be put aside. The truths of God's Word first forced an intellectual assent ; conscience, after long slumber, then awoke in the might of its divine commission, and,

like a heavenly messenger with a sword of fire in the hand, defied him to advance another step. His trouble of soul was long and terrible. He asserted in after years that he had never read of mental agonies more acute than his own ; and it were difficult to over-estimate the weight of this testimony. Yet it was not terror that chiefly dismayed him. "It was not so much," these are his own words, "the fear of punishment by which I was affected, as a sense of my great sinfulness in having so long neglected the unspeakable mercies of my God and Saviour." His soul was not altogether a stranger to fear. The finite being who begins to have a fixed assurance that there is not a relation of perfect concord between himself and the Infinite One, may well experience a feeling of awe ; the man who hears conscience, with iron tongue, proclaiming that sin and misery are as substance and shadow, who has any conception of the deep, drear, moaning affirmative of this, which goes, like a melancholy Arctic wind, over all the centuries of the life of mankind, and who begins to feel that sin lies too deep in his own bosom to be eradicated by mortal hand, may well be afraid. The instinct of the human race echoes the Scripture words, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." But it was no slavish dread which urged him on. His was no longer the reckless bearing of a man of the world, arising from vacancy of thought or sheer imbecility ; nor did he change his attitude for that of shrinking and selfish terror ; nor did he, with haughty recklessness, assert himself against the infinitude of power, a position suiting only the maniac or demon : it was the light of celestial holiness burning eternally around the throne of God in the far deeps of heaven, that caught and fixed his eye ; it was an awakening consciousness of deep moral wants, that filled his heart with yearning sorrow ; it was a conviction that the name Christian had been hitherto, in his case, a vague sound or hypocritic deception, that touched him with hallow-



ed shame; and it was dumb amazement at the fact that the most sublime instance of love ever exhibited in this universe had been unknown and unheeded by him, which brought him at last, a weeping suppliant, to the Mount of Calvary.

The work he had to accomplish was one of stern difficulty. That long course of noisy vanity had, as it were, deafened and distracted his spiritual nature; fixed thought he found in itself difficult; and now he had to stop and think as with his soul in his hand. Had escape been possible, he would have escaped; for he put himself at first in a firmly defensive attitude, and turned again for a time to the charmers whose spells had hitherto held him. Consider what an outlook was his. By a thousand viewless chains he was bound to the world. Known and adulated in all the clubs and London fashionable circles, rejoicing in a rising fame for eloquence, and having long enjoyed the still more delicious fame of wit, keenly sensitive to every shaft of ridicule, and intensely relishing applause, the strings of his very heart would be rent if he tore himself away; while, hardest of all, he saw clearly that friendships, to his tender nature very dear, must either be cast away altogether, or arrange themselves on new sympathies of a comparatively shallow order. But it was to be done; further he could not go; that flaming sword of God's angel, conscience, barred his way.

In deep trouble of mind, he returned to London. He had abandoned the defensive attitude; he no longer stood as one who could put a face on the matter, and, as it were, prove to God that all was right; he had flung away the armour in which he trusted,—he had exchanged complacency for repentance, defence or apology for earnest prayer. It was not yet light within; but outward duty became plain, and with it he proceeded at once. He wrote to his principal friends, informing them that he was not what he had been; he withdrew his steps from every haunt of worldly mirth; despite a

rising feeling of shame, he commenced the worship of God as a householder. He brought himself also, after a severe struggle, to introduce himself to John Newton ; and thus commenced the formation of a new circle of friendship.

At length he began to reap his reward. That peace which has arisen after toil and darkness in so many Christian souls, and which is essentially the same in all,—that peace which came with returning light over the prostrate and trembling soul of Paul,—which brought healing to the agonized heart of Luther,—which was devoutly treasured alike by Cromwell, Edwards, and so far different men as Brainerd and M'Cheyne,—diffused itself at last through the breast of Wilberforce. His testimony was soon decisive that he had reached a higher and more exquisite joy than he had ever known in the saloons of fashion ;—“ never so happy in my life as this whole evening,” are words from his diary of the period. His correspondence began to breathe the earnestness of Christian zeal and the serenity of Christian enjoyment. “ The Eastern nations,” he writes to his sister, “ had their talismans, which were to advertise them of every danger, and guard them from every mischief. Be the love of Christ our talisman.” Again, writing on an Easter Sabbath, “ Can my dear sister,” he exclaims, “ wonder that I call on her to participate in the pleasure I am tasting. I know how you sympathize in the happiness of those you love ; and I could not therefore forgive myself if I were to keep my raptures to myself, and not invite you to partake of my enjoyment. The day has been delightful. I was out before six, and made the fields my oratory, the sun shining as bright and as warm as at midsummer. I think my own devotions become more fervent when offered in this way, amidst the general chorus with which all nature seems on such a morning to be swelling the song of praise and thanksgiving.” He had now deliberately devoted himself to Christ, and resolved that all his energies should be dedicated to His service.

It will be well to pause for a moment, that we may learn the precise position of Wilberforce at this juncture, that we may know what Christian conversion had done for him, and estimate the forces at his command for serving his God and his country.

The look he cast over his past life was one of astonishment and sorrow ; his feelings were as those of a man who, after a night of intoxication and revelry, is aroused from a drunken morning sleep to brace on his armour and go instantly to meet the foe ; or of one who finds that, while he has slept, a fair wind has been lost, and the tide is gone far backward, and he will never by utmost diligence make now a good voyage. He was twenty-six years of age. His life, since his twelfth year, had been one course of mental dissipation ; his intellect, naturally alert, had been abandoned to volatility ; he stood appalled, and well-nigh powerless. Had his will been roused to a giant energy,—had he collected all his faculties for one determined struggle,—had he, calculating that, to attain the mental power and material which a true education might at that epoch have realized for him, a space of ten, or at least five years, of stern, unmitigated, silent toil was absolutely required, deliberately given that period to the task, and performed it,—it is impossible to say what he might have been, or what work he might have effected. But he made no such grand effort. Life was so far advanced that he did not dare to withdraw his hand for a moment from work ; he does not seem to have even formed the conception of what was necessary.

Wilberforce, though perhaps the greatest statesman of the century whose character was based upon evangelical principle, cannot be regarded as the Christian statesman of our era. The modern Christian statesman has not yet appeared. For, by statesman, in this august and peculiar sense, must be meant one who exerts so much power in the political world,

that the general aspect of affairs is coloured by his influence, the attitude of his country among the kingdoms of the world that which he, at least in a large measure, has appointed. The Christian statesman will be he who can impart to Britain once more the aspect of a great, free, Protestant nation ; who, in the nineteenth century, will bring Christianity into politics, and, helming the State with the strong arm of a Cromwell, make it apparent to all nations that he holds his commission, as governor, from God ; who will gather round him that deep and ancient sympathy with vital Christianity which does exist in these lands, who will combine it with the science and adapt it to the conditions of the time, and make the flag of England once more, not the mere symbol of commercial wealth or military renown, but the standard of Christian civilization.

These words may seem visionary and Utopian. Is it really so ? Have we tacitly come to the conclusion and agreement that Christianity, that Protestantism, is to be permitted indeed to exert what power it can in subordinate spheres, but, in its distinctive character, is no more to be admitted into the councils of nations ? Have we consented that Britain, when dealing with other kingdoms, shall indeed speak, and with irresistible power, as a commercial, a military, a colonizing nation, but have no word to say as a Christian nation ? It may be so ; but let us perceive clearly what we imply by the concession. We imply that nations, as such, are exempted from the ordinance of glorifying God ; that, in this important respect, they form an absolute solecism in the universe. Nations must be intended, I say not in what precise way, but at least in their distinctive character, to bear a part in the universal harmony of the universal choir that hymns the Creator's praise. Something more vital than political morality, more nobly human than desire of national wealth, more lofty than martial honour, must one day again penetrate the Senates and

Privy Councils of the world. Since the days of Cromwell there has been no leader of the British nation, no Pitt, no Fox, no Wellington, of whom you can say that, as a statesman, he was Christian. Wilberforce was a Christian Member of Parliament; to a perceptible and blissful extent, he introduced Christianity into the councils of Great Britain; it is probable that since his day we have retrograded; but the Christian statesman of the modern epoch he was not.

The power of vital godliness did all for Wilberforce that was, perhaps, without a miracle, possible; it did not create within him new powers; it did not convey supernaturally into his mind new and sufficient stores of knowledge; but it did much.

Light, frivolous, fascinating, Wilberforce made a narrow escape from being a character of a sort which is surely one of the most pitiful human life can show,—a fashionable wit and jester. How profoundly melancholy is the spectacle of a man, the main tenor of whose life is an empty giggle and crackle of fool's laughter! How ghastly, after it is all past, does the perpetual smirking and smartness of such men as Theodore Hooke appear! Wilberforce could vie with these in powers of entertaining and being entertained; his whole training, with one slight exception, tended to foster these powers; and now they had found their sphere, and passed their probation. His political position was the natural counterpart of that which he occupied in social circles. With powers of natural eloquence which drew unmeasured applause from such men as Burke and Pitt, with great quickness of memory, and, to a certain extent, of arrangement, with a judgment naturally clear and strong, and with a heart which would not swerve from the path of a rough genuine English honour, he had reached a conspicuous station as a supporter of Pitt, and could speak a distinct, independent, and valuable word on most subjects. Yet he records that his political life was then without

unity, that he "wanted first principles," that his own distinction was his "darling object." His final estimate of this period was nobly stern and true :—"The first years that I was in Parliament I did nothing,—nothing, I mean, to any good purpose."

Both as man and as politician, he was now changed. The flickering light of vacant and aimless mirth faded from his lip and eye, the sacred energy of Christian purpose began to mould and brighten his features ; if there was still somewhat of restlessness and unsteadied vehemence in his look, it had one point toward which it always turned, and its natural kindness was gradually deepened and sublimed into the holier warmth of Christian love. As a politician, he reached a new independence and individuality. He could no longer wheel round in the circle of party ; he could no longer, even to a limited extent, take his opinions in the mass from the faction to which he belonged ; he told Pitt he would still support him where he could, but that he was no longer to be a party man, even to the same extent as formerly. He looked out for a work of his own, for something which he might do as one whose character was in all things professedly Christian, and who believed that it was as God's servant alone that he could take a share in the government of Britain. For this work, whatever it might be, he lost no time in preparing himself. He instantly set about the task of concentrating his faculties, and enriching his intellectual stores ; he turned to study with an earnestness he had never hitherto known ; above all, he commenced the careful and unintermitted study of Holy Writ. His biographers have not erred in considering this last the most important element in his new mental discipline. The power of the Christian Scriptures to engage, to train, and to occupy the intellect, has been attested in express and emphatic terms by such thinkers as Jonathan Edwards and Lessing.

Wilberforce did not wait long ere he found his work. It was twofold. On Sunday, the 28th of October 1787, he wrote these words in his journal: "God Almighty has set before me two great objects, the suppression of the slave trade, and the reformation of manners." With solemn yet courageous earnestness, he assayed these august achievements; he had already counted the forces against him in his public and private Christian walk; after looking them full in the face, this had been his conclusion: "But then we have God and Christ on our side; we have heavenly armour; the crown is everlasting life, and the struggle how short, compared with the eternity which follows it! Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

It is with Wilberforce, in his connection with those two movements, the first of which resulted in the emancipation of the slaves in the British Colonies, and the second of which developed into what is called Exeter Hall philanthropy, that we are primarily concerned. But it were well, if such might be possible, to reach a conclusive estimate at once of the value of the great measures of Abolition of the Slave Trade, and Slave Emancipation, and of the part Christianity bore in their attainment; while the class of kindred phenomena, which are included in the general designation of philanthropic efforts for the reformation of manners, has a special claim upon our notice.

Of the particular method in which Wilberforce led the contest against the Slave Trade, and of the various stages of that contest, it is unnecessary to speak. His task cannot be alleged to have been one of a severity demanding the highest efforts of courage and endurance, or whose performance called forth peculiar heroism. That he did encounter obloquy and scorn, that he did undergo heavy and protracted labour, is certain; that, from year to year, he stood forth with the calm determination of one who had a great work to do,

and who would do it with English courage, sagacity, and perseverance, is undeniable ; that, in the whole course of his operations, he earned that substantial applause which is the meed of every man who performs well and completely the duty which he regards himself commissioned of God to accomplish, no one can question. But he deserves no higher honour than this. His sphere of exertion, whatever its inconveniences or occasional troubles, was, on the whole, one of honour and ease ; failure brought no danger or biting disgrace, and from the civilized world voices were raised to cheer and applaud him ; it was worthy and honourable to struggle and conquer as he did, but the fact of his having done so can never be such a testimony to character as similar exertions would have been in the case of a man who worked in the glare of half a world's indignation, and had to contemplate the risk of death.

It was in 1789 that he delivered his first regular speech on the Slave Trade. Even when we have made allowance for the enthusiasm of the moment, we must conclude that the opinions expressed of this performance by Burke and Bishop Porteous prove Wilberforce to have been a man of great natural eloquence, and of rich and vigorous mind. "The House, the nation, and Europe," according to Burke, "were under great and serious obligations to the honourable gentleman for having brought forward the subject in a manner the most masterly, impressive, and eloquent. The principles were so well laid down, and supported with so much force and order, that it equalled anything he had heard in modern times, and was not perhaps to be surpassed in the remains of Grecian eloquence." Porteous styles it "one of the ablest and most eloquent speeches that was ever heard." It lasted three hours. Its effect was to bear the House, with astonishing unanimity, along with the speaker. No additional proof is required that Wilberforce possessed popular



talents of a high order. In 1807, after many a galling disappointment, his efforts were crowned with success. The traffic in slaves was declared illegal by the British Parliament. Congratulations poured in upon Wilberforce from all parts of the world ; but while drinking deeply of the joy which rewarded his toil, he abandoned every claim to honour for himself ; all pride was swallowed up in thankfulness. "Oh what thanks do I owe the Giver of all good, for bringing me, in His gracious Providence, to this great cause, which at length, after almost nineteen years' labour, is successful !" These are the words of a true Christian soldier ; their humility and silent earnestness, amid the applause of millions, are beautiful. He lived to see a still greater day. When he retired from political strife, the standard he had so long borne was held aloft by Buxton and others ; with deep emphasis did he again thank God when, in 1833, Britain emancipated her slaves.

Concerning this whole work of Slave Emancipation, we have now heard the two extremes of opinion. For a time, and a long time, it seemed to be a subject on which men were at last agreed ; a universal pæan rose round it, and continued to be chanted on all platforms, in all newspapers, in all schools of rhetoric and poetry. But, after a time, there exhibited itself a disposition to question the advisability and intrinsic excellence of the measures, and at length a strong revulsion of feeling has taken place in certain quarters. Mr Carlyle has poured the chalice of his scorn, comparable to molten iron, on Britain's whole dealing with the negroes of her colonies ; and, wherever his influence is paramount, a disposition to denounce the proceedings of the advocates of abolition and emancipation manifests itself.

The pæans were perhaps struck on too high a key. The stern and numerous difficulties which have since revealed themselves cast no shadow before ; that one grand, all-comprehending difficulty of *making men free*, implying, as it does,

such an elevation of nature, such a raising above sensuality, sloth, and foolishness, into industry, self-respect, and wisdom, as only a Divine hand could at once effect, was not then apprehended ; it did not strike men that, if they destroyed Sodom, they might have in its place a Dead Sea. But the plaudits had more reason in them than the denunciations. There is something wholesome and inspiring in the sound of human rejoicing over wrong and iniquity even *believed* to be overthrown ; on the other side, the vituperation, when all is well looked into, turns out to have little more on which to support itself than the old fact, whose truth we must so often acknowledge and put up with, that human affairs are not ideal, that human intellects are bounded. It might be possible to strike the truth between the opposing views.

Slave Emancipation, of which the abolition of the Slave Trade may be considered a part, was a great initial measure, which did not exhaust the case, which did not even proceed far with it, which cannot be said to have touched certain of its greatest and most strictly original difficulties, but which cleared the ground for its discussion, fixed the imperative conditions of the problem, and laid down the fundamental axioms by which it must be solved. It cleared the atmosphere round the whole subject ; its very excess, if such there was, the very fact of its abstaining from any tempering or temporising expedients, but attempting to break, as by one sledge-hammer blow, the chain of slavery, made its teaching of certain great principles the more emphatic.

The first great truth it declared was none other than that of which something has been already said, and on which it is needless here again to enlarge : That an essential equality subsists among the members of the human family. It was the second great assertion by Christian Philanthropy of this fundamental principle : Howard's work in the prisons of the world was the first.

Slavery, in its essential nature, is precisely that which puts man individually in the stead of God, as the ultimate source of authority regarding a human being. Hence is at once obvious the error of those who, pointing to the subordination of class to class, and such other arrangements of society as restrain and circumvent every man in every sphere, exclaim that slavery cannot be abolished. From the laws of society, in some form or other, we cannot escape ; but, whatever its imperfections, society must be regarded as originally an ordinance of God, enforced by a necessity of nature, and, with whatever subordinate disadvantages and difficulties, conducing towards the very highest and noblest results for the individual and the race. No man, therefore, is a slave, however hard he toils, however ill he fares, in simply conforming to its legitimate ordinances. But whatever negatives the action of the powers with which God has gifted a man, and which he holds from Him, is of the nature of slavery ; every social imperfection involving injustice and partiality, is more or less allied to it ; and when a man is bought and sold as a chattel or animal, and the action of those powers may altogether be negatived, we have its darkest and most accurate type.

The second lesson which these legislative measures read to the world was this : That Mammon was not the ultimate authority in this question ; that, though the pecuniary loss were of indefinite amount, there were other considerations, of justice and humanity, which could overtop them, and that infinitely. It was as if Mammon and Justice had been pitted against each other, with the world for an arena : Mammon pointed to these souls of men, said they represented gold, and declared that the smoke of their torment would blacken the dome of heaven ere he let them from beneath his sway : Justice flung to him twenty millions, and bade him, with a contemptuous smile, relax his hold. By whatever law the questions connected with the Negro race were to be ultimate-

ly settled, it was not to be a consideration in the case, how they would realize the greatest pecuniary profit for white men ; the general principle was emphatically enounced, that, whatever of wealth or luxury a man may extract from any portion of the earth, by making his fellow-man the tool for its attainment, this method is essentially unjust, and on no conceivable hypothesis to be defended.

There has been not a little discussion as to the respective exertions of Clarkson, Wilberforce, and others, in the attainment of their common object. To this controversy there shall here be contributed not one word. We saw that Wilberforce accepted, as part of the work appointed him by God, the conduct of the struggle for the abolition ; and we saw him, when the Slave Trade was no more, devoutly thanking God for having honoured him to bear his part in the work. But, in what shares soever the trophies of the victory be distributed to individuals, it is just to claim the whole achievement as a triumph for Christianity. Ramsay, whose book, published towards the close of last century, was the prelude to the agitation, was a Christian pastor ; Clarkson and Wilberforce both toiled under the direct commission of Christian love. To such an extent Christianity did colour our national counsels. In the former century, the love of the gospel had shed its mild light in the dungeon ; it now spoke an emphatic word against slavery,—a word which, however little it may have yet availed, will assuredly not die away until that foul stain of shame and guilt is wiped from the brow of humanity. All that was of real value in the measure was its testimony, on the part of the first nation in the world, to justice and love : that testimony was priceless ; and it was the might of Christianity which drew it forth. Every noble mind, every heart touched with poetic fire or raised by philosophic ardour, hailed it with instant and exultant applause. Cowper, Coleridge, Byron, Schlegel, Fichte, and a list of such, embracing, with

probably not a solitary exception, all the greatness and nobleness of the close of last century and the commencement of this, declared Slave Emancipation to be a high and glorious aim and achievement ; Mr Carlyle was, so far as I know, the very first man of genius and nobleness, both unquestioned, to hint a doubt regarding the fundamental principles which animated Clarkson and Wilberforce. And whatever scorn or gratuitous insulting pity may accompany her path, it is an auspicious omen, that the form in which Christianity has walked forth most prominently in the sight of nations in these latter ages has again been that of love ; she is about her natural and peculiar work when she brings hope to the prisoner and freedom to the slave.

We arrive now at the second portion of that twofold task which Wilberforce believed to be appointed him by God. This was the reformation of manners. The method to be adopted was that of public exposure and philanthropic appeal. The force of Christian love, scattered in countless bosoms in the British Islands, was to become, as it were, conscious of itself, to gather together and unite : when this was accomplished, it was to turn in concentrated power against evil, in whatever form and place it appeared, either by bringing its influence to bear directly on the Legislature, or by local and personal endeavours. The efforts of Wilberforce in this province mark the commencement of the second stage of philanthropy ; the fire was to spread wide, and the attempt was to be made to give it form and union.

The part played by Wilberforce, in connection with this extension of the philanthropic movement, can be easily defined and comprehended. Wherever there germinated a scheme of benevolence, he cast on it a glance of encouragement ; whoever designed, by voluntary efforts on the part of himself and his fellows, to benefit any part of the human race, looked towards Wilberforce, nor looked in vain. But, after

all, he was rather the principal worker in philanthropy, than its organizing, ordering, compelling chief; for him we still wait. To discern, by far-reaching and unerring glance, the real force and the real perils of this wide-spread benevolence, this many-worded spirit of kindness, that gathered its assemblies and spoke on its platforms; to connect it, as a phenomenon, with the characteristics of our age; to be a head to its great throbbing heart, an eye to its hundred, earth-embracing hands, was not given to Wilberforce. Philanthropy, under him, was aptly and expressively emblemized by that motley throng which Sir James Stephen so graphically depicts swarming in the chambers of his house; a number of living and embodied forces, some of whim, some of folly, some of mere maudlin softness, all inclined to do good, and complacently concluding that good intentions would pass for substantial working power. But it was no slight or profitless work which Wilberforce did. Unless you know how to direct your motive power, you will do no work; but unless you have your motive power, you are in a still more hopeless case. He, and the right-hearted men who were around him, fanned into a flame which covered Britain, that spirit of active love which Howard evoked. To consider it open to discussion whether this service was of value, seems to be to deny every instinct man feels, every rule by which he acts. If a man says that it is not a consoling, an auspicious fact, that in a million breasts there is awakened the will, the bare will, to work and war for the diffusion of light over our world, for the social and moral amelioration of men, I know not how to answer him. If a man, contemplating the grand temptation which, by necessity of position, assails Britain in these ages, the temptation to circumscribe, so to speak, the blue vault by an iron grating, and beneath it, as in a temple, to kneel before the shrine of Mammon, finds no healing, counteracting influence in the spectacle of thousands of British hands

stretched out to take Mammon's gold and lay it on a higher altar, I cannot assail, as I cannot conceive, his position. If any one does not perceive that there is an infinite difference between a nation, slothful and avaricious, that will do and give nothing in the cause of God and humanity, and a nation saying, "*I will give, I will act, and if I know not how, I will earnestly hear,*" I can merely signify dumb astonishment. Had philanthropy hitherto done nothing, its presence in the world would still be a blessing as of the early rain ; if it has in certain directions fallen into error, it is both a commonplace and a fatal mistake to cast away good with evil ; an error not committed, save by madmen, in other departments, for you do not cast away your sword for its rust, or your scythe because it is not hung with perfect scientific accuracy. But philanthropy, Exeter Hall Philanthropy, has done much. It has alleviated the woes of factory children, it has erected ragged schools, provided shelter for the houseless, food for the starving ; it has sown the world with Bibles. Since the day when Howard called it forth, as a power distinctly to be seen and felt in human affairs, its progress has been one before which oppression has fallen, its step has startled cruelty and crime. God has honoured it hitherto, and He will bless it still.

But however well it may be to express this plain truth, and however lawful to draw encouragement therefrom, it is of more strict practical avail to clear the way for future work, than to rejoice over what has been done. A few remarks bearing on the operations of philanthropy may therefore be submitted to the reader.

First of all, it must be clearly and definitely understood what this wide-spread benevolence, considered as an operative agency, actually is. Emotion of every sort, all that portion, so to speak, of the mind which generates action, is simply a force ; whether it does good or evil, depends entirely

on how it is directed. Steam lies for ages unknown as a moving power ; then for ages it is used merely in mines and coal-pits ; at last it unites all lands by its iron highways, quickening the pulse of the world, and making man finally victorious over every element. The tenderest pity, the most ardent love, can never be aught but a steam-power ; you must know precisely how to use it, or it steads you not. Nay, such a thing is possible as that the force should do evil instead of good. In Hannibal's army at Zama, the elephants were turned back upon his own troops ; it would have been better if he had had no elephants.

This is a principle which, when stated in terms, no one will contest ; but it is of vital importance, and is very apt to be practically lost sight of. The excellence of a man's sentiment is apt to cast a delusive brightness over his thought ; when we listen to one whom we know to be a good man, the fervour of whose spirit delights and inspires, we feel it a thankless and ungrateful task to bring his schemes under the dry light of reason, and to tell him they are naught. Yet, when we come into contact with fact and reality, emotion goes for nothing ; good intention is whiffed aside ; no music of applause, no gilding of oratory, will keep the-sinking ship afloat ; it settles down like a mere leaky cask. Philanthropists must learn to look deeper than the first aspect of a project, to examine its ulterior bearings, to see how it allies itself with social laws ; they must accustom themselves to resist the soft charm of plausible eloquence, to examine the bare truth advocated, and to discern and accept this truth when recommended by no eloquence, and scarcely caught from stammering lips.

In the next place, it cannot be too often or too emphatically insisted on, that philanthropy should clear its eyesight by acquaintance with that science which has for its object the laws of the social system. Since all human affairs are



inextricably interwoven, no man can rightfully hold himself entitled to put his hand to any part of the social fabric, without knowing how his act will affect other parts. There are only two possible hypotheses on which the science of the social system can be attacked : that there are no laws in economic and social matters, or that they are so profoundly mysterious, that an attempt to know them is *prima facie* absurd. The first, no one, since the days of Bacon, would maintain. The second might be urged with some faint show of reason. The freaks of individual will are countless ; the soul of man is the one thing, of all we know, which comes nearest to giving us the idea of infinitude. But it is assuredly true, on the other hand, that there are certain great laws which may be discerned acting in man's life from age to age, and that their general action may be traced and depended on. Political economy can be attacked by no arguments which do not militate, more or less, against science in general ; and to answer an argument levelled against modern science, would be giving a sufficient reason to every reader to close the book. Philanthropy ought more and more to ally itself with social science, and the happiest results may be looked for from the union.

Once more, and with reference to the practical working of Philanthropy, it must be remembered that the secret of success in every undertaking is, under the Divine blessing, to get *men* to do it. The whole might of Mr Carlyle's genius has been bent to the proclamation of one great truth,—the sumless worth of a man. Everything else is dead. Constitutions of absolute theoretic perfection, laws of faultless equity, riches and armies beyond computation, will be of themselves of no avail ; men may put fire into these, but these will never fill the place of men. The operations of the Bible Society have given the most emphatic confirmation to Mr Carlyle's words on this point ever furnished in the history of the world, or possibly to be

furnished. They have afforded one other proof that it is by man God will convert the world ; the Bible itself, when alone, has not supplied the want. Here is the difficulty of difficulties. You can get gold by subscription ; but a man of real power, of piety, faculty, energy, cannot be subscribed for. It is by the sagacious, powerful man, that the man of power is known ; imbecility, seated on a mountain of gold, can do nothing here. And yet, till you get your men, nothing is done : if you give your gold to bad or incompetent men, it were *better* that you flung it into the Thames. It must be fixed as an axiom in the heart of every philanthropist and of every philanthropic society, that this is the point on which success or failure absolutely depends. It must be fairly comprehended that it cannot be attained by mere examining of reports, or any other mechanical process, although each of these may contribute its aid. Not for a moment is it to be forgotten that it must be done. If all the men employed by philanthropy in its unnumbered schemes were godly, earnest, and able men, what a power for good were then acting in our country and to the ends of the earth !

These suggestions are to be looked upon in the light of finger-posts, indicating the way towards comprehensive reform, rather than unfolding the methods of such. If it is a noble and effective form of exertion which arises from union, sympathy, and the power of moral suasion, let us recognise and honour the great movement of Christian philanthropy. If pestilent babblers will endeavour to possess our platforms, and to substitute ignorance and sentimentality for knowledge and manly compassion, let men of real power, by the might of those clear, strong words, which an English audience loves, strike them into harmless silence or benignant shame. If it is a fact, so boldly written on the forehead of our age that its denial is an absurdity, and so firmly impressed upon our modern forms of life that its alteration were an attempt to hide

the steam-engine, to bury the press, to raze from the annals of man the French Revolution, that the voice of public opinion, whether right or wrong, does now rule Great Britain, let no true, and bold, and earnest man disdain to speak into the public ear by those channels which determine the sound of that voice. Let Exeter Hall stand ; shut no door where men are wont to assemble to listen to men ; but let every one who listens there scrutinize and judge in the awe of a fearful responsibility, and let every one speak as before God. When one surveys society in our days, and lays to heart how it is guided, he does not fail to learn that the task of speaking words to a human assemblage at present is as the task of holding the lightnings.

The conduct of the opposition to the Slave Trade, and the perpetual promotion and superintendence of philanthropic operations, were those aspects of the life of Wilberforce which first caught the eye, and stood out most boldly to the public gaze. Yet perhaps it is by somewhat altering our point of view that we gain a full and clear comprehension at once of the character in which he really was most serviceable to his country, of the fountain whence each separate stream of his activity flowed, and of the highest lesson his walk conveys. Regard him solely in his capacity as a Christian man ; look upon him as he moves in the circles of Parliamentary ambition,—in the full influence of that icy glitter which is the light and the warmth of those high regions. You then see how living Christianity, unassisted by the might of talent, can bear itself in the midst of political excitement and intrigue ; you may then judge whether those ancient arms, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, have lost their heavenly temper.

You find that during his whole life these never fail him. From fashion, and its loud pretence of joy, he turns aside ; the atmosphere of faction is too foul for his purified organs ;

holding by the standard of truth and godliness alone, he becomes himself a party. In a region unseen by the world, in the stillness of the closet, where only the All-seeing Eye is upon him, he lays open the recesses of his soul, that Divine light may penetrate and pervade its every chamber ; there, on his knees before God, he laments for secret sins, and pleads for holiness in his inner life ; he looks earnestly and with severe honesty within, searching his heart with the Word of God as with a candle, that there may lurk in it no thought or feeling to exalt itself against the Most High. He then goes into Parliament and the world. By the gleam of the gold it is seen that it has been purified by celestial fire ; his light shines before men ; they acknowledge it to be a steadfast flame, untainted by the dim atmosphere in which it glows, and ever pointed to heaven ; they are compelled to glorify the God whom he serves. He embodies the simple might of goodness,—the serene majesty of light. He shows what that politician has won whose political scheme is briefly this, that he will follow the Lord fully ; and proves what a rectifying, healing, irradiating power in human affairs is the awakened and vivid consciousness of immediate relationship to the Creator. He touches every question with the Ithuriel spear of Christian truth ; and the falsehood in it starts forth, as by irresistible compulsion, in its own image. And so, where the subject suggests doubt, where soft folds of plausibility are drawn over moral delinquency, or the shifting meteor of expediency offers itself for the pole-star of duty, men turn to Wilberforce : look on this, they say, with your eye : we believe it has been purified by a light Divine.

To trace the phases in which this distinctive godliness manifested itself in his Parliamentary career, and to exhibit the testimonies given to its heavenly virtue by the men with whom he worked, were to detail his actings from his twenty-sixth year. One instance must serve for a thousand.

We have all heard of the impeachment of Melville. Of his perfect innocence, or partial delinquency, this is not the place to speak. However it was, the case was one of profound interest in Parliament; and Ministers were extremely anxious to screen him. Wilberforce was doubly impelled to come to a conclusion favourable to him. His heart was naturally of a delicately tender and kindly order, and his old friend Pitt had set his heart on clearing Melville. He examined the matter, but could not suppress the consciousness of grave doubts. He listened eagerly to the explanations offered by Ministers, when the discussion came on in Parliament; looking into them with the piercing flash of English shrewdness, quickened by godly earnestness, he saw, or thought he saw, through them: he hesitated not a moment, but rose to his feet. The eye of Pitt was on him, with the pleading of affection, and the authority of one deeply esteemed: Wilberforce felt the fascination of the look. But he faltered not: he spoke the bold, unmeasured words of Christian honour; he went against Ministers, and condemned Melville. His words fell on an attentive house; the number of votes he influenced was named at forty; Ministers were defeated. It was felt that in a question of simple integrity, where casuistry had to be eluded, and plausibility swept aside, Wilberforce was the ultimate authority. In the British Senate in the nineteenth century, when a point of morality had to be settled, it was not to the man of poor duelling "honour," it was not to the philosophic moralist, it was not to the upright merchant, men looked for a decision: it was to the Christian Senator, whose code was his Bible, and who walked, in child-like simplicity, by the old conversion light. Consider the number of opinions represented in that assembly, and then estimate the weight and worth of this testimony.

Thus did Wilberforce, in his station in public affairs, conspicuously manifest to men the fresh and prevailing power of

living Christianity, and testify its superiority to every other light. The book which he published was just the same testimony expressed in words. To criticise, however briefly, the *View of Practical Christianity*, would be now out of date. It was marked by no peculiar traits of genius, by no originality of thought or style. But it was clear, explicit, warm, and animated ; over it all there breathed the fervour of love and the earnestness of faith ; it was an attempt to urge the pure gospel on the fashionable and worldly, and hold it, to use Milton's superb language, in their faces like a mirror of diamond, that it might dazzle and pierce their misty eyeballs. And mankind did consent to listen to its pleading ; it went round the world : very few books have been so widely popular. It was published in 1797.

The domestic life of Wilberforce was of that happy sort which defies long description. It can be but in rare cases that the description of the course of a river, if given mile by mile, is interesting ; even Wordsworth cannot persuade us to trace with him, more than once, the course of that Duddon at whose every winding he has erected a mile-stone in form of a sonnet. The river rose among green craggy mountains ; in its joyful youth, it was the playmate of sunbeams ; the dimpling, wavering, sparkling child, that dallied with the zephyrs, or leaped over the precipice, wreathing its snowy neck in rainbows ; as if in the strength of youth and manhood, it flowed long through a bounteous and lordly champaign of cornfield and woodland, resting calmly in the noon-day sun, listening to the reaper's song ; it widened into a peaceful estuary, its force becoming ever less, and, in a silent balmy evening, it lost itself in a placid ocean. This is all we care to know about the river. Much the same is it in a case like that before us. Wilberforce's boyhood, manhood, and old age, are well enough conceived by reference to this common figure.

At the age of thirty-eight he married. His was a happy family ; and a congeniality in the highest tastes bound him in sympathizing affection to his wife. In the arm-chair, or at the festal board, he was seen to the greatest advantage. By reading what he has left us, we can evidently form no idea of what he was either in Parliament or in his home. He expressly tells us that he did not succeed with his pen ; that the quickening excitement of society, the genial impulse of speech, caused his ideas to start forth in more vivid colours, in quicker and more natural sequence : and the particular power of the orator and of the wit partakes so much of the nature of a flavour,—of an undefined and incommunicable essence,—that a fame in that sort must always depend mainly on testimony. A witticism without the glance that lent it fire is often the dew-pearl without its gleam,—a mere drop of water. But it cannot be doubted for a moment that the social powers of Wilberforce were of an extraordinary order. The two qualities whose combination gives probably the most engaging manner possible, are tenderness and quick sympathy ; the instantaneous apprehension of what is said, and its reception into the arms of a tender, sympathizing interest. Wilberforce had both. His heart was very tender. To go from the country to the town would affect him to tears. When John Wesley stood up and gave him his blessing, he wept. We have seen how he delivered his testimony against Melville : hear now how they afterwards met. The account of the interview will be best given in Wilberforce's own words : “ We did not meet for a long time, and all his connections most violently abused me. About a year before he died, we met in the stone passage which leads from the Horse Guards to the Treasury. We came suddenly upon each other, just in the open air, where the light struck upon our faces. We saw one another ; and at first I thought he was passing on, but he stopped and called out, ‘ Ah, Wilberforce,

how do you do?" and gave me a hearty shake by the hand. I would have given a thousand pounds for that shake." A generous and tender nature speaks in this last expression. For everything in nature or man he had a glance of sympathy; provided always it lay in the sunlight,—provided it had no guilt or baseness in it.

It is easy to present Wilberforce to the eye of imagination, as he used to appear when seated in his arm-chair, the centre of a pleased and mirthful throng. Diminutive in size, with features spare and sharp, with vivid, sparkling eye, he does not rest, but has a tendency to jerk and fidget; his face is piquant, mobile, varying in its lights and shades, like a lake in a sunny, breezy April day. An idea is suggested by some one of the company; a slight twinkle, an instantaneous change of light in his eye, shows he has caught it, and embraced it, and looked round and round it; he tosses it about, as if from hands full of gold dust, till in a few moments it is wrapped in new light and gilding,—or he playfully transfixes it on the unpoisoned dart of a light, genial banter, shrewd and arch, which finds its way straight to the heart,—or his face grows solemn, and he utters, unostentatiously but earnestly, a few devout words regarding it. Now his face is one free, indefinite, joyful smile,—now he mimics some parliamentary orator,—now he is giving some graphic, faintly caustic sketch of character, with a sharp catching smile about his lip,—and now he listens quietly, a tear in his eye. Sir James Stephen, who doubtless was intimately acquainted with Wilberforce, compares his vivacity to Voltaire's, and sets his tenderness above that of Rousseau: Madame de Stael pronounced him the wittiest man in England. But perhaps the most entirely satisfactory and expressive idea of his whole manner to be possibly reached is to be found in these words of Mackintosh, who visited him when advanced in life: "Do you remember Madame de Maintenon's



exclamation, 'Oh, the misery of having to amuse an old king, *qui n'est pas amusable !*' Now, if I were called to describe Wilberforce in one word, I should say he was the most 'amusable' man I ever met with in my life. Instead of having to think what subjects will interest him, it is perfectly impossible to hit on one that does not. I never saw any one who touched life at so many points ; and this is the more remarkable in a man who is supposed to live absorbed in the contemplation of a future state. When he was in the House of Commons, he seemed to have the freshest mind of any man there. There was all the charm of youth about him. And he is quite as remarkable in this bright evening of his days, as when I saw him in his glory many years ago."

The concluding years of his life were calm and beautiful. He spent them at his country residence of Highwood. More and more his eye turned towards the home he was now nearing ; through his vivacity,—through his still fresh activity,—there shone more and more the softening, mellowing light of holiness. He loved to expatiate under the open sky, to watch the dew-drops, to gaze long and with unsated delight upon flowers, the rising gratitude and delight of his soul flowing forth in the words in which King David voiced similar feelings on the battlements of Zion three thousand years ago. "Surely," he would say, "flowers are the smiles of God's goodness."

In 1832 he passed tranquilly into his rest.

Richly gifted by nature, Wilberforce never repaired the waste and dissipation of his faculties in those years when a man ought to be undergoing a serious and methodic education. The mighty intellectual powers were not his ; the strength of far-reaching, penetrating thought, the comprehensive and ordered memory, the imagination of inevitable eye and creative hand. Unless that perpetual glow of feeling, that free and exuberant fertility of wit, that natural power of

eloquence and acting, which he possessed, come within the strained limits of a definition of genius, he certainly had none. But in the evening of his days he could look over his life, and recall the hour when he had devoted himself to his Saviour, and thank God, without hypocrisy, that he had been enabled in measure to perform his vow. His life was not ineffective or dark ; it was spent in the noblest manner in which a man can live, in advancing the glory of earth's eternal King, by blessing that creature man whom He has appointed its king in time ; and over it there lies Divine grace, uniting, harmonizing, beautifying all, like the bow of God's covenant.

THOMAS CHALMERS.

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THOMAS CHALMERS was born in one of those homes which have been the pride and the blessing of Scotland ; to which, rather than to aught else, Scotland may point as her achievement among the nations, and to whose final uprearing countless influences and agencies have co-operated. It is often in the far distance that causes work, whose effects are seen in living bloom around ; the cloud was gathered from the remote Atlantic, whose drops cause the farmer's little corn-field to spring ; the hillock on whose side his cottage turns its bright face towards the southern sun was upheaved by the might of central fire ere mankind was born. The fierce struggle in the dark wood of Falkirk, the victorious charge on the bright plain of Bannockburn, the wrestling of Luther with Satan in his silent chamber at Erfurt, the far flight and inevitable gaze of the intellect of Calvin, the rugged earnestness of Knox, the godly valour of Peden and Cameron, all conjoined their agencies to build up the quiet homes of Presbyterian Scotland. Nor was this an unworthy or insignificant consummation : the almost reverential admiration with which men have looked into the circle of The Cottar's Saturday Night proclaims it to have been noble and sufficient. Of such homes, substantial comfort and cheerful piety were the

characteristics ; religious thoughtfulness and industrious peace dwelt there in kindly union ; the “ auld Ha’-Bible ” was their corner-stone. Such homes write on the face of the world the best evidence of the truth of Christianity ! And the father of Thomas Chalmers was the worthy head of such a home, a fine example of the right-hearted Calvinistic Scotchman. Of deep and tender feelings, yet ever manly and firm, humble and reverent towards God, unobtrusive yet unbending in the presence of men, John Chalmers of Anstruther was that style of man which forms the life-blood of a nation, and whose presence in a family is the satisfactory guarantee of an education which may, without hesitation, be pronounced good. Thomas was his sixth child ; he was born at Anstruther, in Fife, in March 1780. He showed from the first a noble disposition : truthful, joyous, affectionate ; the reader can judge how the influences of such a father and such a home would act upon him.

In his childhood there occurred little worthy of remark ; little more, probably, than is to be told of all healthy and clever children. When so much a child as to be grossly ill treated by his nurse, he is yet so much a man as to observe with strict honour a promise of secrecy which she easily won from his unsuspecting heart. He soon determines to be a minister, and, not to lose time, chooses his first text, “ Let brotherly love continue,”—a text, by the way, of which he would have approved as heartily at sixty as at six. One day he is caught pacing his room, and repeating, in evident emotion, the words “ Oh, Absalom, my son, my son.” These are pleasing traits, if nowise extraordinary ; they at least show clearly that Thomas Chalmers was a noble child.

At school he was almost precisely what it is best for a boy to be ; if he erred at all, it was on the safe side. This portion of his training may be characterized fully and fitly by saying, that the important education of the class-room was

carefully prevented from encroaching on the perhaps even more important education of the playground. He was distinguished in school by no remarkable proficiency, and might be known among his class-fellows only by the greater strength and buoyancy of his nature. When he chose to learn, he learned fast ; this is an undoubted and important fact. But it was in the field or the playground, where the free, loud laugh of the glad young bosom rang cheerily, every faculty awake to watch the turns and win the triumphs of the game, every muscle in fine healthful tension, every drop of blood surging in exultant fulness of life, that an observant and penetrating eye might have discerned the probability of his trimming skilfully between metaphysical dreaminess and mechanic dulness, and attaining a healthful, powerful manhood. He was at school rather a Clive than a Coleridge. His youthful mind was one of marked candour and purity ; at no period of his life was he tainted with aught definitely vicious or ignoble. His nature was open, generous, affectionate ; his strength, physical and intellectual, exuberant ; he was social, truthful, and pure-minded.

Ere completing his twelfth year, he entered the University of St Andrews. During the first two sessions, he was still a school-boy. "Golf, football, and particularly handball," with similar avocations, occupied his time. Anything deserving the name of classical culture he never received. At the precise period when a few additional years at school would probably have affected his whole history, he was sent to the university ; his sympathies, unawakened to the greatness and the beauty of antiquity, were soon arrested by mathematics.

It was in his fourteenth year that his mind awoke to its full intellectual vigour. At that period he commenced his third session at the university, and entered upon the study of mathematics. The pursuit was eminently congenial, and

he at once became distinguished. The teacher of the mathematical classes in St Andrews at this time was Dr James Brown, and Chalmers was much in his society. It was the period of the French Revolution, and Dr Brown participated largely in the excitement of the time. He was of the school of radical reform in politics, and no doubt of extremely liberal sentiments on religious matters. As was to be expected, Chalmers embraced the opinions of his instructor. He read Godwin's *Political Justice* with delight and approval; he gazed on that vast, elaborate, and surely imposing structure, with its ice pinnacles clear, sharply defined, glittering in the wintry air, and deemed it a palace in whose many chambers the human race might at length find rest; he breathed for a time the thin atmosphere of its chill virtue and clockwork justice, and thought it were well always to be there. The ideas which he had brought from his father's house fell away from him; for the homespun but substantial garb of Scotch Calvinism, he substituted one of modern make, jaunty and of bright colour, but spun mainly of vapour and moonshine. The thorough depravity of man, an atonement by the death of Christ, salvation by faith alone, were left to the weak and narrow-minded. What seemed a wider and more brilliant prospect opened to the eye of the aspiring student. Scaling the sunny heights of college promotion, loving truth and proclaiming virtue, winning the crowns of fame, expatiating in the sky-fields of thought and imagination, basking in the smile of the Universal Benevolence, he would go on in his strength and prosper. This may be named the first epoch in the intellectual history of Chalmers.

In 1795, he entered the Divinity Hall, formally to commence the study of theology. His mind, however, was yet under the spell of geometry. He had forced his way to the French mathematical literature, and was diligently occupied in that field. Towards the close, however, of his first theo-

logical session, a more important intellectual influence than that of mathematics was brought to bear upon his mind. He became acquainted with the Inquiry of Jonathan Edwards. Its study was to him an exercise of rapturous delight ; his mind was filled with it till it seemed about to "lose its balance." It was the second determining influence in his mental development ; mathematics and radicalism were the first. One or two observations on the nature of this influence, and on what it reveals, seem here necessary.

The mere fact that, at the age of fifteen, it was to Chalmers not a task, but a positive and intense pleasure, to follow the dry light of the great American metaphysician into those remote and difficult regions of thought in which it expatiated, is a proof of extraordinary intellectual endowment. At an age when his sympathies might have been expected to find comfort and response in the circulating library, and his intellect a pleasurable occupation in the lighter walks of history or science, he found his whole spiritual nature freely and delightfully exercised by the treatise on the freedom of the will. And the effect it produced on his boyish mind is remarkable. With the exception of Swift's iron misanthropy, there is perhaps no phenomenon in literature comparable to the unimpassioned coldness of the mind of Edwards in the investigation of those high and awful themes which are directly or indirectly the subject of his Inquiry. His argument, when well understood in its limits and conditions, is, I think, irrefragable ; yet it is more than can be demanded of the human mind to disrobe itself so entirely of human sympathy, as the mind of Jonathan Edwards is seen to disrobe itself as we read that treatise. Edwards was certainly not devoid of kindness of heart, but, in composing his work on the freedom of the will, he appears to have resolved himself absolutely into a thinking apparatus. He deliberately looks into hell, and the whole heat of its burnings cannot melt into a tear the ice

in his eye ; he gazes on a great portion of his brother men stretched to eternity upon a wheel, and his eyelid quivers no more than if he saw a butterfly.

The circumstance with which we are at present concerned is that, despite the tremendous impression produced on the mind of Chalmers by the Inquiry into the freedom of the will, its effect was not to darken but to brighten, not to depress but to elevate. It produced "a twelvemonth of elysium ;" these are his own words. His intellect was not beaten hard, and rendered dead to all other impulses,—a common case with young men whom the genius of some writer overpowers. He did not, with a trembling, gloomy, irresistible curiosity, pry and pry into the world of mystery here opened up to him, as young Foster would have done. He accepted the truth he found ; he saw the whole universe in God. But when he went with Edwards to the mouth of hell, he still heard the melodies of heaven. He saw that Infinite Power clasped the world, but he could feel that Infinite Wisdom guided the infinite might, and be content. His mind expanded and brightened. He might have been seen at early morn in the dewy fields, whither he went to wander alone, and to expatiate in the vast conception ; to feel the world but a little station on which to stand and see himself overarched by the infinitude of God as by the illimitable azure above his head ; to lift up his eyes and catch a glimpse of the golden chains by which the universe hangs from the throne of God. Looking upon him in those hours, one is reminded of that striking passage in modern poetry, in which the great poet of nature and meditation, whose conception of certain great influences which aid in moulding lofty and thoughtful character was perhaps stronger than that of any other, has pictured the corresponding stage of mental history in the case of his own hero

" The growing youth,

What soul was his, when, from the naked top



Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun  
Rise up and bathe the world in light ! He look'd—  
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth,  
And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay  
Beneath him :—Far and wide the clouds were touch'd,  
And in their silent faces could he read  
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,  
Nor any voice of joy ; his spirit drank  
The spectacle : sensation, soul, and form,  
All melted into him ; they swallow'd up  
His animal being ; in them did he live,  
And by them did he live ; they were his life.  
In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.  
No thanks he breathed, he proffer'd no request ;  
Rapt into still communion that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power  
That made him ; it was blessedness and love."

Chalmers was not at all smitten by fear ; the passionless demonstration of Edwards, of all modes of representation perhaps the best calculated to impress his mind with terror, cast over it no abiding gloom ; he experienced the sublime emotion of reverential awe, but he knew nothing of slavish fear. His mind was of that radically sound and noble order which responds to influences of hope and love rather than of fear and constraint ; he had an affinity with light.

He had not yet, however, completed the stages of what was strictly his education. He had to pass through a more painful ordeal than he had hitherto known. In 1798, he entered the family of a gentleman as private tutor. Nothing of moment occurred during his residence there. It was, indeed, a fine reply which he gave when taunted by his employer with pride, one worthy of a self-respecting and high-minded youth : "There are," he said, "two kinds of pride, Sir ; there is that pride which lords it over inferiors, and there is that pride which rejoices in repressing the insolence of superiors. The first I have none of ; the second I glory in : " yet slight im-

portance is to be attached to the probably accidental squabbles in which he became involved. But about the period of his quitting this residence and returning to St Andrews to complete his theological studies, when he was just entering on his twentieth year, he fell in with D'Holbach's once celebrated *Système de la Nature*. The agitations of his tutorship had, it may be, somewhat unsettled and fevered his mind, rendering it more open to assault, disturbing that calm concentration of power by which error is best met and repelled. The pompous, far-sounding rhetoric of the book charmed his ear; the magnitude and apparent stability of its scientific scaffolding caught his eye; its tone of calm assumption, as if it were the conclusive utterance of ultimate truth, perplexed and confounded him. It preached virtue of the most high-flown order. It could not be the birth of ignorance, for it was reared upon the foundation of modern science. It planted its scientific engines on the earth, and with an air of perfect strength and philosophic deliberation turned them against principalities and powers. First, it swept from earth's horizon all religions, the Christian among the rest; these it flung into one grave, and wrote over it,—Superstition. Then it cast a thick impenetrable smoke, as from the depths of hell, over all the heaven, blotting out those fields of immortality towards which the eye of humanity, through its weary pilgrimage, has ever gazed with wistful hope; these it called the phantom pictures of enthusiasm and imagination. Last of all, it aimed its bolts at the throne of the universe, to dethrone Him that sat there. The ultimate achievement of science was to seat itself in the throne of God. And how beneficent was its reign to be! The green earth was to bask in universal sunshine, impeded by no darkening cloud; the fair field was no longer to be trodden by the hoof of the war-steed, the harvests of earth were no longer to be fattened with human gore; the world was to become one vast dancing saloon, where men abode for a time, and from

which, on any occasion of inconvenience, suicide, the noble right and privilege of the free, was ready to dismiss them ; all Ethiopians were to be washed white, or at least white-washed ; the infancy and boyhood of humanity had passed, and now the noonday of its years had come. These things were to be done by the knowledge of the laws of the world ; such laws were all physical ; ideas could be mechanically accounted for ; “our soul has occasion for ideas the same as our stomach has occasion for aliments.” The proud philosopher required but one word to account for the universe,—physical law. Such was the teaching of the *Système de la Nature*.

The mind of Chalmers was of a decidedly scientific cast ; he had been long accustomed to the bare and precise reasoning of mathematics ; he delighted in a definite, comprehensible, tangible proof. Here, then, was D'Holbach, pointing out his laws, measuring, with consummate assurance, heaven and earth, plausibly, nay, powerfully, exhibiting the evils of superstition, and making them synonymous with the evils of religion, talking in the loftiest strain of universal benevolence and felicity, and concluding with a fine rhetorical panegyric on virtue. To the baron it was sun-clear that a divine power in the universe was superfluous ; these were the laws, why go beyond them ? And if divine power was superfluous, it was but the next step to pronounce belief in it noxious. Chalmers was staggered. It seemed, for a time, as if that Eye which Edwards had shown him lighting the universe was to go out. He was in deep anguish and perplexity ; his friends feared for his reason. But his mind was too fair, too noble, and too substantially grounded, to lapse into scepticism. He had heard one side of the question ; he honestly turned to hear the other. The result was, that he was firmly and for ever established in the belief of Christianity.

The various steps in this gradual consummation I am unable to trace ; but the outline of the process may be discerned. He candidly studied the great apologists of last century—Beattie, Paley, and Butler. The first of these it was who steadied him after the maddening draught of materialism : his final declaration, uttered long afterwards, was, “Butler made me a Christian.” He soon saw that, with all its pretence and paraphernalia, the system of D’Holbach was a mere film on the surface of things ; the arguments of Beattie certified him of the reliability of man’s inner beliefs ; and Butler’s giant intellect gave him a glance into the real structure of the universe. He came to the unalterable conviction that there is a God. He then looked calmly at the historical evidence for the fact, that Jesus of Nazareth did perform works competent only to almighty power on the plains of Judea ; the clear and masterly logic of Paley satisfied him that it was so. The other steps naturally followed. The result was a deliberate conviction that it is a fact dubitable by no fair and capable intellect, that the Christian religion was positively revealed to man by the living God.

Two remarks here suggest themselves.

The first is, That this method of proof embraces substantial evidence for the truth of Christianity. There are minds which are incapable of doubting the existence of God : born with an ingrained conviction that man was created for an end, that the universe is not a mad flickering phantasmagoria, devoid of purpose, and meaning blank nothing, they are unable to compass the conception of the non-existence of the Supreme Mind. This form of intellect is doubtless the most substantial and healthful of all. And it is likely that the mind of Chalmers was radically of this type ; the temporary delirium produced by D’Holbach would probably have departed even without positive opposing argument, when his mind regained the power of calm thought. But, if this central fact is

doubted, it must, first of all, be placed on an impregnable basis : and how can it be so, save by exhibiting the reasonableness of an acceptation of the ineradicable beliefs of humanity, of a trust in “the mighty hopes which make us men ?” It being placed beyond doubt that God exists, and that the world has been established by Him, the next thing is to advance to a more precise idea of His general government and of our relation to Him, an end to be attained by earnest contemplation of that small portion of His ways which we do know,—in other words, by a consideration of the analogies of Butler. The ground thus cleared,—the need and the reasonableness of Christianity demonstrated,—the time will have come to consider the actual historical evidence for its truth ; and the clear, impartial, comprehensive summary by Paley of the testimony to the fact that Christ raised Lazarus, and rose Himself, from the grave, will always continue a satisfactory embodiment of the essentials of this evidence. If the inquirer now believes that the mission of Jesus was Divine, that his “living Father” sent Him, the whole system of revelation of which He is the corner-stone will be seen to stand on an impregnable basis ; all that was delivered before the Christian era resting on His authority ; all that has been delivered since secured by His promise. In the individual case, there may be a mode of arriving at the conviction of the Divine truth of the Scriptures different from that here sketched. These Scriptures may be so applied to the soul by the Holy Spirit that their Divine origin cannot be doubted. It is equally true that the profound accordance with the general order of things here on earth exhibited by these writings, the answers they embody to man’s questionings, the supply they offer to man’s wants, may be so explored and comprehended that the result must be an assurance that the whole phenomenon is utterly beyond explanation, save on the hypothesis that the ordinary dealings of Providence were in one

case diverged from, and the natural powers of man in one instance divinely supplemented. But when the question is a simple question of fact ; when a man desires not, in the first instance, to enter the edifice of Christianity, but to learn whether the pillars of it were laid by God, in the same positive, independent, objective way in which He created the world, the plain logical vindication of the historical fact, that a superhuman power accompanied the words of Jesus, is a legitimate form of Christian evidence.

For it must be distinctly avowed on the one hand, and kept in view on the other, that the province of the Christian apologist is limited. There is one sphere which he can never enter, the sphere of the operations of the Divine Spirit. He may show the consistence of Christianity, viewed as an external fact, with the laws of evidence ; but he cannot open the eyes of "the world" to see that Spirit whom the Saviour declared its inability to see ; he cannot enable the natural man to discern the things which are "spiritually discerned." Were the work of Christian apology complete, it could by possibility have achieved but two things : the proof of Christianity as a religion *once* supernaturally given, and the proof of Christianity as a religion *in all ages* divinely characterized. The work still remaining to be done in Christian apologetics falls mainly under the second of these heads. That work Paley and his school did not certainly, save perhaps in a scarce perceptible degree, attempt ; but they did attempt, and with a success which can hardly be called in question, the former portion of Christian apologetics. They answered the question which men will naturally and fairly in the first instance put to the Christian—How do you know that your Master spoke in Judea, and spoke with supernatural authority ? And a satisfactory answer to this enquiry must always embrace a proof of Christianity sufficient to content the sober mind, and to condemn the gainsayer.

The second remark is but a particular application of the first. It is, that in the present day there exists a disposition unduly to depreciate the apologists of last century. Against Paley in particular a very strong prejudice has begun to gain ground—a prejudice of perhaps slight importance in itself, and not absolutely without foundation in reference to Paley individually—but of decidedly injurious tendency in throwing discredit on the substantial service rendered by him to the Christian cause. His character it is not difficult to define. It was not of the noblest type; but it was still further removed from one radically ignoble. His mind was antithetically opposed to all that holds of poetry; emotional energy of every sort was alien to his mental atmosphere; his temperament was a uniform mean, an untroubled calm, removed at once from the glory and the gloom of storm. His intellect bore such relation to a mind like Paul's as a creed bears to a Prophecy of Isaiah—as the cold steel of a Roman legionary to the flaming sword of an angel. Joy to the measure of rapture, sorrow to the measure of despair, he could not feel; the devotion of the martyr and the raving of the fanatic were alike removed from the balanced moderation of his mood; the mighty passions which surge in the revolution or crash on the battle-field found no answering sympathy in his breast. And Foster declared truly that this “order of mind is ill fitted to embody the highest grandeur of the Christian character—that the natural incapability of great emotions operates very strongly to prevent the prevalence of the Christian spirit.” Yet it is just as plain, on the other hand, that Paley was radically an honest, able, worthy man. Of rough Yorkshire kindred, and humorous homely ways, he was precisely of the stuff from which nature makes the substantial, deliberate, steady, sagacious Englishman; there was a certain sarcastic, though kindly ruggedness and plainness in his speech, pointedly opposed to in-

sincerity or meanness ; a warm homely man, whom those who knew him loved ; one totally devoid of affectation and pretence, with little ambition, and no greed. And his intellectual light, if very dry, was powerful ; the error was subtle it could not pierce, the truth was sure which stood its scrutiny. To discern with conclusive certainty the vital points of a question ; to draw them out in clear logical sequence ; and to estimate their real and available value, few minds have been better able than Paley's. His style wants poetic adornment and emotional fire ; yet it has a certain conclusive satisfying tone, and its perfect clearness lends it no mean charm ; it makes you feel that it is not all base metal which does not glitter. Paley's mind, though wanting certain affinities with minds of the highest order which Johnson's possessed, was essentially more substantial and powerful than that which produced *Rasselas*. If you look well, moreover, you will find the moral system of each nearly similar ; the high and serene region of Christian holiness, as distinguished from prudential virtue, neither can be said to have entered. I shall not object to Johnson's being entitled a hero ; but if his theory of virtue resolved itself radically into prudence, as Mr Carlyle grants, I shall at least consider Mr Kingsley in an untenable and absurd position, when he represents Paley's character as an unanswerable argument against his reasonings. But, indeed, the absurdity into which Mr Kingsley, in the person of his hero Alton Locke, has suffered himself to fall, is complicated and glaring. To effect that confutation which the precise nature of the infidelity of last century required, an intellect such as Paley's was positively demanded. The faintest gleam of enthusiasm, the slightest warmth of passion, would have neutralized its effect. It was the cool, "philosophic," enlightened intellect which found Christianity unsatisfactory ; it was the cold sharp edge of the scalpel of modern science



which was declared to have exposed its unsoundness ; unstable and excited minds, natures enthusiastic and fanciful, might be allured by the imposing fable ; but if you divested yourself of all prejudice and all passion, and turned on the Bible the same clear impartial judgment which you brought to the study of Euclid, it was not a matter of doubt that rejection of every notion of its inspiration would result. To meet such opponents, to dissipate such ideas, Paley was the very man. “Not so fast,” he said, “I’m Yorkshire too : look at this phenomenon just as you look at any other in nature or history ; look at it on all sides, with piercing scrutiny, but with fairness and without haste ; and then, whether convinced or not, declare honestly if it does not at least require a tremendous effort to consider it the fruit of imposture or frenzy ?” Since the days of Paley, infidelity has changed its tone ; the old jargon about priestcraft, imposture, and fanaticism, has well-nigh died away ; there is a caution now in assailing fairly and in front the facts of Christianity : and for this change there can be no doubt we are largely indebted to him. Mr Kingsley is a man of rich emotions and unquestioned earnestness ; but his intellectual force is puny to that of Paley ; and it is not with the best grace that a clergyman of the Church of England puts into the mouth of a sceptic a vague and irrelevant charge against the character of him who wrote the *Horæ Paulinæ*. The temperament of John Foster differed as essentially from that of Paley as Mr Kingsley’s, yet his verdict on Paley’s achievement as a defender of Christianity was as follows :—“It has been the enviable lot of here and there a favoured individual to do some one important thing so well that it shall never need to be done again : and we regard Dr Paley’s writings on the Evidences of Christianity as of so signally decisive a character, that we should be content to let them stand as the essence and the close of the great argument on

the part of its believers ; and should feel no despondency or chagrin if we could be prophetically certified that such an efficient Christian reasoner would never henceforward arise. We should consider the grand fortress of proof, as now raised and finished, the intellectual capital of that empire which is destined to leave the widest boundaries attained by the Roman far behind." This may require qualification and circumscription, but it is a very important testimony, and will ultimately be found to be substantially correct.

We have seen that Chalmers passed through an ordeal of doubt ; and such doubt as was peculiarly ensnaring to his mathematical intellect and strong scientific tastes. That Harmattan wind, in which, it is said, no soul of man can now live, had passed over him, with its doleful music and its burning sand ; but he came through unscathed ; on the homeward side of the desert his joints were not loosed, his nerves were not unstrung, his frame had been too firmly knit to be relaxed, he sprang forward as if he had never drooped. And on any theory of character, this is the grand proof of the vital force and natural vigour of a man. Doubt is the foe by vanquishing which the young knight of truth wins his spurs. Doubt is the lion guarding the palace of truth, which must be looked at, and dared, and controlled by the dauntless eye, but in passing beyond which alone are to be won the conquests of manhood. It had no power to petrify or paralyze Chalmers ; he inherited the instinctive knowledge that between the true, however difficult its proofs may be to exhibit, and the plausible, however difficult its disguise may be to pierce, the distance and difference are simply infinite. It was a moral impossibility for him to have been a sceptic ; he would have forced his way to conscientious and hearty action, or sunk into madness or the grave ; doubt was to him agony ; he felt it to be the negation of all work, the death of action, if it was not its birth ; and he struggled towards

truth as a giant might struggle through flames to his dearest treasure.

In his twentieth year he was licensed to preach the gospel.

For the functions of the high calling to which he aspired, he felt no enthusiastic predilection. His thirst for knowledge was by no means satisfied, and the decided bent of his ambition was still towards academic preferment. Instead of seeking work in his profession, he proceeded to Edinburgh, and studied at the University there during two sessions. Metaphysical and mathematical subjects chiefly occupied his attention ; but his reading was doubtless wide and varied. It is generally said that he was a man of meagre knowledge, that he could lay no claim to erudition. There is truth in the assertion ; but it is apt to render us oblivious to another truth of no slight importance, by which it is to be qualified and supplemented. What is generally and technically understood by learning, Chalmers did not possess. But with the great questions of his day, and the general questions which at all times naturally agitate the human mind, he was abundantly acquainted ; and the impetuous force of his own genius was sufficient to overpower and render invisible even what knowledge of books he did possess. His native strength refused to be trammelled by the thoughts of other men ; he so completely fused in the fire of his own intellect what he obtained from others, every ingot was so perfectly melted, that it became impossible to recognise it in that molten torrent. And of the pedantry of learning he was perfectly, felicitously free. If he found good wheat lying before him, he deemed it to the full as valuable and fit for use as if it had lain three thousand years in the case of a mummy ; if common sense and plain evidence set their stamp on a fact or argument, he did not care to affix to it the seal of antiquity. We saw him deeply influenced by the literature and ideas of the French Revolution ; we found him rejoicing in the sublime abstrac-

tions of Edwards ; we found him plunged in the surges of doubt by D'Holbach, and rescued by the strong arms of the great apologists of his own or the preceding age. And now, for two years, during which he engaged very sparingly in ministerial work, he led the life of a student ; a life which, in his case, could not be idle. We must not forget, besides, that he had mastered French, and carried his studies into the rich mathematical literature of that language ; his scientific acquirements, lastly, were becoming more and more extensive and profound. If not learned, he was certainly a man of great information.

We must now pass lightly over what is yet one of the most interesting and characteristic portions of the history of Chalmers,—that, namely, which embraces the first few years of his incumbency in Kilmany, and during which, amid scorn and conflict, he taught mathematics and chemistry in St Andrews.

In that period, with all its eccentricity, and with even a certain degree of displeasing extravagance, there is much to admire. So great and healthful is the young strength, that it must attract the sympathies of the healthful and strong. A surging, insatiable energy characterizes Chalmers during the time. It seems a pleasure to him to find hills in his way, for the mere opportunity of grasping and hurling them aside ; his toil and his enjoyment rise together ; he is a perfervid Scot, a lion *rampant* : mathematical studies, chemical studies, considerable metaphysical studies, parochial duties, university struggles, book-making on an important scale, and much more, are insufficient to damp his first youthful ardour. His intellectual powers, too, have not been outrun by his energy ; he has given unquestionable proofs of a rare order of talent,—the speedy and joyous subjugation of every new science which came in his way, the suggestion of a theory for the reconciliation of Scripture and geology, the acquisition of a clear,

glowing, and finely balanced style. There is sufficient proof, also, that he has already conceived, in outline, an entire scheme of Christian evidence. Lastly, and of all most decisive, he has begun to make his influence distinctly felt among the men who come within his sphere ; Chalmers of Kilmany has become one to whom eyes are turned, and concerning whom expectations are formed ; the invisible crown set by nature on his brow is slowly waxing visible. And, whatever may be doubted, it is certain that his moral qualities are of the kingly order. Courage, tenderness, enthusiastic loyalty, an ever open hand, wakeful and ardent sympathy with all that is high, and pure, and healthful ; these, and similar traits of nobleness, cannot fail to evince that here is another of those whom, from the ancient time, nature has intended for trust, honour, and love.

But it must be conceded that, in an estimate of the character and powers of Chalmers during this youthful period, no express reference is necessary to Christianity : Chalmers, in fact, was then a Christian pastor in a sense and manner which is now becoming obsolete. The last century produced in Scotland a form or semblance of Christianity which will probably never re-appear. It was the result of the general decay of earnestness over the land, and the sickly flowering of a sentimental and wordy philosophic morality. From the religion of the Puritan and Covenanter there had been a recoil ; to be virtuous was good and fair ; honour and truth were to be commended ; sublime benevolence was to be preached ; but to defy earth and hell for your belief, to worship God under the mist of the mountain corrie, to mount the scaffold rather than throw a sand-grain in the eye of conscience, were the follies of bigotry and excitement, produced endless commotion, and even endangered the interests of general morality and respectable society. The grand distinctive doctrines of Christianity were, probably, in some sense true ; to deny them

altogether would stultify the Bible ; but they were to be quietly considered incomprehensible, and, as strictly esoteric mysteries, to be excluded from public ministrations. Who is not familiar with the watchwords of the honey-mouthed school which came then to occupy the pulpits of the Church of Knox ? Virtue its own reward, white-robed innocence descending from heaven (in no great haste), decorum and decency prim of visage and trim of garb, the enlightenment of the age, the happiness of the greatest number, flowed blandly forth as the preaching of Christianity. The art of the preacher was softly to mouth truism, skilfully to gild commonplace. That school produced Blair. It is interesting to observe what it made of Paul. Readers may have seen one or two sermons by a noted Moderate preacher in which the attempt is made to depict him as a Christian orator. The fiery and urgent man, whose words flame and burn on the page, who startled the philosophic serenity of the sages of Athens, and uttered his grand song of triumph in the scowl of Nero, who could not open his lips without speaking of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, who abandoned, in express terms, as different in idea from Christianity, the wisdom of Greece and the morality of law, was represented standing, in polite and graceful attitude, and lecturing Felix, for more than half an hour, on virtue, mercy, justice, and respectability in general, cautiously avoiding the "mysteries" of the Christian religion, and recommending it to his weak hearer in a soft and harmless garb borrowed from Seneca. The effect over the country was simple and decisive. The heart of the Scottish people turned from the modern school : the popular instinct named it—Moderate.

It may be thought strange that such a man as Chalmers could ever have been a follower of a school like this. Yet it is a fact admitting of no question. Christianity had never fairly laid its grasp on his heart ; he had never profoundly

considered whether it was the real living Christianity he held or no. He offers a striking example of the not unusual phenomenon of a man whose natural force and nobleness will remain unparalyzed by any influence of school or creed. But it may be that this easy-suiting garment called Christianity is not really adapted to display the Herculean mould of his limbs ; it may be in the garb of the warrior, in the old mail of the martyr, that we can best discern the strength and majesty of his frame ! Let us proceed.

At about the age of thirty Chalmers engaged to write the article Christianity for the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*. In the midst of the study and composition connected with this article, he was attacked by a severe illness, which confined him for a period of four months. It was an era in his history ; the most important era of all. It was from it that he dated the central fact of his life—his conversion.

Death had, of late, more than once passed by Chalmers, casting on him the pale glare of his eye ; one after another of his brothers and sisters had been carried to the grave. At length the impartial foot seemed to be drawing near to his own threshold ; he felt no coward fear, but, with an earnest calmness which he had not hitherto known, he began to think. Fear was no important agent in the mental revolution which ensued ; the state of mind indicated by Bunyan's Slough of Despond, he expressly says, he never experienced. His nature was of the nobler sort, which is drawn by a glimpse of heaven, and that a heaven of holiness, rather than startled by an unveiling of hell. He could not but discern that there had been something in the breasts of the early Christians which was not in his. Eternity, in its unmeasured vastness, enwrapped his mind ; time, seen against its burning radiance, seemed dream-like and filmy. The virtue of philosophy, he began profoundly to suspect, was not the holiness of God. The power of this virtue, too, to do much to-

wards the regeneration of the world, became questionable. His old friend Godwin, in discoursing of justice, had spoken thus :—"A comprehensive maxim which has been laid down upon the subject is, 'that we should love our neighbour as ourselves.' But this maxim, though possessing considerable merit as a popular principle, is not modelled with the strictness of philosophical accuracy." Chalmers hardly found this maxim, defective as it might be, conformed to in the parish of Kilmany. His appeals on the subject had been received with imperturbable calmness. He had witnessed no effect whatever from lectures, however impassioned, on virtue and benevolence. In his own heart, and in his sphere of work, something seemed essentially wrong. And so there commenced a work in the privacy of his closet, which may, without any figure, be said to have resulted in the kindling of a new vital energy in the centre of his being. Its progress was gradual, but every step was taken irrevocably ; its conclusion found Chalmers transformed from a historic into a vital Christian, from a philosophic into a Christian pastor. Christ had become to him all in all. I shall not intrude upon the privacy of his closet while the great change is taking place. I shall not attempt to trace the fading of old things into oblivion and death, and their gradual resurrection as all things become new in Christianity. I shall not venture to watch his soul in its pleadings with God, until, at last, that wonderful passage bears personal reference to Chalmers, "the kingdom of God is within you." But there is interest in noting the appearance of weakness which presents itself as we look into that closet. It recalls the "hysterical tears of a soldier like Cromwell;" the "delusion," whose strength "scarcely any madhouse could equal," of Bunyan ; there is not, certainly, such intensity of feeling, but the sense of a divine presence and agency is the same. We hear him earnestly pleading for pardon, though his life has been highly



virtuous ; he calls himself a sinner, though always respectable ; he trembles, although surely God is good. His soul is prostrate. What can we hope for from the like of this ? What advantage has it over the most "melancholy whimpering" of fanaticism, of which Chalmers could once speak ? May we not apprehend a total relaxation of energy, a total shrivelling of intellect ? Time will answer the questions. Meanwhile one point of considerable moment may be remarked. It is before the Infinite God he stoops ! It may be deemed possible that conscious alliance with the Infinite will not make him weak among the finite ; possibly, when he once feels that the eye of God is actually fixed on him, the light of all other eyes, whether in wrath or in applause, may grow dim in proportion ; perhaps, when he lays down the philosophic armour in which he has trusted, he may go forth in the strength of weakness, mightier than before. "'Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all, but oh ! it is conscience, too, which makes heroes of us all."\*

Times are changed in the manse and parish of Kilmany. The minister is changed, and many changes follow. One by one the worldly aspirations that have fired the breast of Chalmers fade away ; reluctantly, but resolutely, the eye is averted from university honours ; reluctantly, but irreversibly, the determination is taken, and the mathematical volume closed. One great idea embraces his soul like an atmosphere, the glory of God ; one great work lies before him, to manifest that glory in the good of man. His soul now gushes forth at all seasons in prayer : his aim with himself is no longer to preserve an unblemished walk before men, and to have the testimony of his heart that he possesses the manly virtue of the schools ; his aim is the inward heaven of Christianity, the mental atmosphere that angels breathe, unsullied purity of thought and emotion in that inmost dwell-

\* Coleridge.

ing where hypocrisy cannot come. His aim with his people is no longer merely to repress dishonesty, to promote sobriety, to produce respectability in general; it is to turn them to righteousness, that they may be his joy and rejoicing in the day of the Lord; it is to array them in that robe, purer than seraphs' clothing, in which not even the eye of God can find a stain; it is to lead them with him as a people into the light of God's countenance.

His parishioners, meanwhile, are astonished. They see by "the glory in his eye" that some strange new light has dawned upon him. They sat listless while he descanted on the beauty of virtue, but they cannot sit unmoved while his heart glows within him, and his face seems suffused with a transfiguring radiance, as he unveils the beauty of holiness, and turns their eyes to the wonders of Infinite Love streaming through Jesus down upon the world. Nor can their apathy maintain itself when he carries his ministrations into the domestic circle, and with burning earnestness presses home individually the offers and the appeals of the gospel. The parish of Kilmany glows with returning Christianity, like the fields of opening summer. For it is no partial change that has come over Chalmers. Partial characteristics were never his; halfness went against the grain of his nature; he had held all his beliefs firmly. And now, in the manhood of his powers, when the feeling was beginning slowly to permeate Scotland that a man of master intellect had arisen in the land, after he had long and diligently walked in the path of this world, he was arrested as by a blaze of light from heaven, smitten awhile to the ground, and then raised up a new man, a Christian. He had formerly known the God of the fatalist, and had bowed, in a certain ecstatic awe, before Him; now he knew the God of the Christian, and believed him to be Love. He had never worshipped sinful self; now even righteous self was crucified. It was

a great day for Scotland when Chalmers, in the might of his opening manhood, became vitally Christian.

It was about this time, in August 1812, that he married Miss Grace Pratt. Of his domestic concerns it is unnecessary to say more than that his home was one of deep and tranquil comfort ; in all embarrassment, toil, and opposition, a sanctuary of inviolable repose.

But his fame has been extending ; the news that some mysterious change has passed over the minister of Kilmany has thrilled electrically over Scotland. Such oratory has not been heard in these parts in the memory of man. It speedily becomes known that one of the greatest preachers in the Church of Scotland ministers weekly in a sequestered valley near the estuary of the Tay. A feeling of deep gladness begins to pervade the Evangelical party, as the new leader steps forward to take the command. And hark ! from the respectable, soft-going, moderately-religious ministers, what voice is that ? “As for Chalmers, he is mad !” What a piece of testimony is here ! How decisive, how comforting ! “Paul, thou art beside thyself.”

This fortuitous sneer about madness is not void of suggestive meaning. Look at the great workers and warriors, the great thinkers and governors, all who have been of the kings of the earth : does not their power, in one universal aspect of it, admit of definition thus,—A force as of madness in the hand of reason ? In our age, we find two men who pointedly suggest this combination ; Thomas Chalmers, and, in certain respects still more forcibly, but in others far less, Thomas Carlyle.

The sequestered Fifeshire valley cannot retain Scotland's greatest preacher. The Tron Church in Glasgow becomes vacant ; and after a sharp contest, in which he is pitted against Principal Macfarlane, Chalmers is appointed its minister. Calmly balancing arguments, he concludes that the hand of

God is in the arrangement, and that it is his duty to go ; but he is well aware that he leaves tranquillity for turmoil, the trust and tenderness of personal friendship for the din and vacancy of public station and applause ; he bids adieu to his quiet valley and its one hundred and fifty families with deep and honest sadness. “ Oh ! ” he said, long afterwards, “ there was more tearing of the heart-strings at leaving the valley of Kilmany, than at leaving all my great parish of Glasgow.”

It was some time after quitting Kilmany that Chalmers, in an address to his former parishioners, bore that emphatic and weighty testimony to the power of evangelical Christianity as a moral agency, which has been so often quoted and referred to. He distinctly declared that his preaching of mere virtue had been absolutely powerless ; but that the proclamation of God’s love in Christ Jesus was at once mighty. His words furnish an additional and important attestation, that the simple truths of the gospel of Jesus are gifted with a power to lay hold upon and impress healthy and unsophisticated intellects, which belongs to no moral or philosophical dogmas. In Chalmers, Christianity was seen in its ancient freshness, beauty, and power ; and in our century he found its might to purify the hearts and lives of men, to breathe moral health over a people, to radiate light around, as prevailing as when the star led the way to Bethlehem. He was, and any man like him will be, a centre of beneficent influence. Such talents as his must ever continue rare ; but what were the effect to be looked for from a pastorate whose members all resembled him in the single but paramount circumstance of godliness ! Imagine the land sown with pastors kindled, as by Divine fire, with that ambition which God, in a promise unspeakably glorious, has appointed for them : — “ They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.” It lies within the discernible and traceable power of a truly Christian ministry to shed over

our land a brightness as of the resurrection morning. The nation would live anew ; the golden day would break ; the baleful forms and influences of crime would be smitten ; and infidels, as they saw the serpents which now cast their deadly coils round the limbs of the nation, writhing, with dazed eyes and relaxing hold, in the overpowering light, would be astonished and silenced.

From the time of his settlement in the west may be dated the commencement of that intellectual kingship which Chalmers can be said to have long exercised over the great body of the Scottish nation. He now steps forth into that arena where are the severest tests of greatness. He becomes the cynosure of a city and people ; he reads applause in every eye ; he hears it from every tongue. Now is the time to know what he really is. Does Chalmers in elevation seem in his natural station and atmosphere ? Does he, amid noise and pretence, lose the power of distinguishing and prizing real work ? Can he gauge and measure fame, and put it to its uses like any other dispensation of God ? Can he distinguish between adulation streaming in from all the winds, and which, in all its varieties, is either mere vacant sound or selfishness set to music, from the still but immortal voice of friendship ? Does he give indications of an unsettled, weakly enthusiastic, or fanatical mind ? Are his air and attitude those of one who has drugged his intellect with an "opiate delusion," and rushes wildly and vaguely on, with haste for energy, and vociferous dogmatism for thought ? These are fair and important questions ; the answers will gradually unfold themselves.

No sooner do we find him fairly in the midst of the tumult and glare of his Glasgow popularity,—no sooner do we perceive his words swaying the minds of thousands, his house the centre of admiring throngs, his fame a theme and topic in the city,—than we are arrested by an instance of retired

and tender affection. There is a member of his congregation, aged twenty. The delicacy and beauty of the young man's thoughts, the purity of his aspirations, the general nobleness of his nature, draw towards him the heart of Chalmers. There springs up between them a close, confiding, boy-like friendship ; tender and impassioned as any friendship of romance, yet cemented by the holier sympathy of Christian love. Their "loves in higher love endure ;" to endure for ever. It was a fair spectacle in our hard-working century, where ideals are so few ;—Chalmers, the most renowned preacher, perhaps in the world, certainly in Scotland, walking by the side of his youthful parishioner, and pouring out his heart in the endearments of a soft, almost womanly affection. If you would thoroughly know the man, look long upon that spectacle. The trumpeting of fame brings no comfort to him ; he permits it to die away in the distance ; but now he finds one heart where pure love dwells, he knows that this at least is real, he folds his friend to his breast in an ecstasy of fondness, he walks by his side under the blue sky, listening to his voice, in deep serene delight, as to a strain of spiritual music. Or look into his closet, and see the friends on their knees before God, the fiery Chalmers and the mild Thomas Smith, to whom his heart is soft as a fountain. Smith gradually faded away in a consumption ; often, with tearful eye, did his pastor bend over his bed, or kneel by its side ; and when, at last, he lay in death's pallor, the strong, manly face of Chalmers was bathed in uncontrollable tears. From of old it has been known, that valour and tenderness form the noblest and most beautiful union ; the lion heart and strength, guided by maiden gentleness ; perhaps all the true and brave are tender. The simple story of his friendship for Thomas Smith brings us into closer knowledge, and, as it were, contact with the heart and nature of Chalmers, than would the mere record of his fame, if echoed through centuries.

It was in the close of the year 1815 that his renown in Glasgow culminated. He then delivered his famed Astronomical Discourses. They were preached on week-days, yet the audience crowded the church. There was a reading-room opposite the edifice; during the time of delivery it stood vacant; the merchant and the politician pouring out, to hang breathless on the lips of Chalmers. His style was now fully formed, and was, in many respects, extraordinary; perfectly dissimilar from any other English style; unallied in diction and cadence to any foreign language, it was the native growth of his mind, an original birth of genius. And whatever minor or particular exceptions may be taken to that style, I cannot regard it as a matter open to dispute, that it has elements of marvellous power and grandeur. Massive and gorgeous, expressive, often graphic, yet with a certain billowy regularity of sentence and rolling cadence of rhythm, it was in the hand of its own magician a really mighty weapon. Exuberant to what in written composition seems diffuseness, it might, if used by a weakling, sound like bombast; but its exuberance is that of tropic woods, and ocean waves, and rainbowed cataracts, the teeming and varied opulence of a mind of boundless sympathy, the grand luxuriance of nature; and when the curbless intensity of the preacher's fire burned in its every word, when the glittering eye, and glowing features, and fiery gesticulation, proved that even its abundance sufficed not to body forth the earnestness of Chalmers, all thought of bombast or diffuseness fled, and the effect was tremendous. The true power of the orator was his; he could subject men not merely to his reason, but to his will. The witnesses to the effect of his eloquence are so numerous and explicit, that doubt is no longer possible on the subject. When the thunder was at its height, when his eye blazed with that strange watery gleam of which we hear, men involuntarily moved their bodies, and, though in postures which

would ordinarily occasion pain, were unconscious of a sensation ; when there was a pause, a sigh arose from the congregation ; strong men, even learned men, wept.

We may form some conception of the impression made by these Discourses, when even now we consider their general tenor. The theme, whatever may be said concerning its argumentative value or treatment, is sublime ; it is handled, too, precisely in the way to give it power in the pulpit ; every point is brought out with such boldness, that no eye can fail to see it ; there is no wire-drawing, no soft murmuring, no delicate pencilling, no easy meandering ; each vast wave comes rolling on, fringed with its own gorgeous foam, and echoing its own thunder. If we consent to place ourselves under the wizard eye of the orator ; if at one moment we mark its rapt and fiery gleam, as if lit in sympathy with those seraph eyes which it saw looking from the empyrean ; if, at another, we watch the deeper softness of its azure glow, while it seems to gaze on Mercy unfolding her wings ; and if we surrender ourselves to the combination of influences, as voice, features, and subject, are all at last in climax, it will surely be no longer impossible to conceive the effect, when the ocean billow, after long gathering, broke.

An elaborate and detailed criticism of these sermons is now superfluous. Many objections have been taken to their logic ; and Foster stands, doubtless, not alone, in objecting to their style. For my own part, I confess that my admiration is intense. They appear to me to have the true poetic glow ; that fusing, uniting fire burns over them, whose gleam compels you to drop your measuring line or gauging apparatus, and utter the word—genius. To accompany the preacher in his high flight seems like sailing with that archangel whom Richter, in his dream, saw bearing the mortal through the endless choirs and galaxies of immensity ; only that here we do not tremble and cry out at the overpowering spectacle of



God's infinitude, for the softening light of the Cross falls continually around us. And, after all that has been said, I must consider the logic of these marvellous Discourses satisfactory. It has been said that the argument against which they are levelled is weak and obsolete. I suspect it is neither ; save in a sense applying to infidel arguments in general. Walking in a still autumn night in the country, by the faintly rustling corn-field or the lonely wood, and gazing upward to the illimitable vault, where the stars in their courses walk silent and beautiful, and where the milky-way, with its myriad worlds, lies along the purple of night like a breath of God's nostrils, is it unnatural for the human being to say, Can the Son of the Almighty have come to die for atoms such as I, in an atom world like ours ? If such a thought is powerless with many minds, it is very forcible with others : I know it to be so with some. And after calm reflection, what do we finally arrive at in the case, as the seemly and reasonable attitude of him who is a feeble and puny denizen of earth, yet a spirit of thought and immortality ? It appears to be twofold. Looking towards the stars, it is seemly for him to bow his head in lowliness and gratitude, and to say, with the monarch minstrel, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that Thou regardest him ?" But then, looking to the corn God has raised to nourish him, the animals over which God has made him king, the fair world He has from of old prepared for him, the still princely retinue or army of faculties he has given him, to master it and to count the stars, he may turn with reasonable and faithful joy to the Son of David, and listen to Him as he says, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow : they toil not, neither do they spin : and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe

you, O ye of little faith?" This seems the true attitude. This last is the satisfactory answer to the infidel argument; and it is this answer which Chalmers, with all the force lent it by modern science, re-enunciated. The telescope may keep man humble, but it cannot crush him into insignificance; the microscope shows ever how the world of littleness stretches away, as if to infinitude, under his feet. And if the might of Omnipotence can arrange, in their unspeakable delicacy, the tendrils of the corals in the depths of ocean, and bring to maturity colonies and nations, in all the animation of their life and the glow of their costume, within the bosom of a flower, and reach a perfection of beauty, after which art toils at what may be called an infinite distance, in the iris, hung in every mountain brook, will God not wipe away a stain as if from His own forehead, will He not humble His great adversary on a territory he hoped he had won, will He not amend the one imperfection in the world—sin? And is it not in consistence with the glory of His name, that, thus to vindicate Himself, He has made a display of mercy and condescension at which heaven and earth may stand agaze?

Chalmers had now fairly reached the pinnacle of Scottish renown. The heart of the populace throbbed responsive to his eloquence; and from perhaps the highest personal authority then in Scotland, from Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh Review*, it received this testimony: "I know not what it is, but there is something altogether remarkable about that man. It reminds me more of what one reads of as the effect of the eloquence of Demosthenes, than anything I ever heard."

And now, when his *Astronomical Discourses* had, with far-reaching trumpet-flourish, heralded his approach, he proceeded to London.

On the day after his arrival in the metropolis, he preached in Surrey Chapel. The service began at eleven; at seven in the morning the place was filled. At length Chalmers

ascends the pulpit, and all eyes are centred there. The sermon commences. The face of the preacher has a certain heavy look, over its pale, rough-hewn, leonine lineaments ; his eyelids droop slightly, and his eyes have something at once dreamy and sad in their expression ; his voice is thin, somewhat broken, unimpressive ; his tone may be called drawling, and his dialect is broadly, almost unintelligibly, provincial. The London audience sits cool and business-like, not given to tumultuous emotion, and accustomed to moral essays ; eye meets eye in half-disappointed surmise. But look, Chalmers is beginning to move ; he gradually works himself into the heart of his subject ; his voice is becoming loud, rich, impassioned : the Londoners sit still unmoved, but now no eyes are wandering ; the preacher warms, the latent heat within beginning to be evolved ; he curbs his spirit sternly, but it will bear him away : his auditors are silent, a consciousness of some strange enchaining power begins to pervade the place, but the light in the thousand eyes fixed on Chalmers is still in great measure that of criticism ; the Londoners still know where they are : the orator warms swiftly to white heat ; his face is radiant with earnestness ; the distending eyeball swims ; at last the fire within lights in it that wondrous watery gleam which tells that the spirit of Chalmers is in the last passion and agony of its might : his audience have forgotten where they sit ; they bend forward in simultaneous assent to his every paragraph ; he has chained them to the chariot-wheels of his eloquence.

Report of the new wonder flies over London. Fashion hears of him in her glittering saloons ; senators and peers speak of him in their halls and cabinets. The highest and gayest in the land crowd to hear him. "All the world," writes Wilberforce, in his journal, "wild about Chalmers." Chancellors and Lords desire to be introduced to him ; the Lord Mayor visits him ; mighty London seems to do him homage.

The spectacle is strange ; the test the man has to stand is searching. From the still and sequestered vale of Kilmany, he has ascended to the highest summit of contemporary fame. He was all unregarded in his quiet parish ; he has now the great ones of the earth becking and applauding round him ; there is a shout in his ears as if he were more than human. Let us not fail to perceive the danger and difficulty of his situation. The assenting voice of one fellow-creature has been said by one of the best of judges to “strengthen even infinitely” any opinion a man may have formed, and a flattering opinion of one’s self is so easy to strengthen ; amid the vociferous plaudits of thousands, or hundreds of thousands, to retain one’s self-estimate, undiminished, unmagnified, unwavering, is difficult indeed. And how many, even of the powerfully-minded, have failed, when popular applause,—that sun whose stroke so often is madness,—has centred its rays upon them ! Edward Irving was no ordinary man ; yet he who, in his noble and beautiful eulogium on this “freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul” he ever met, bears witness to his force and healthiness, tells us also that he swallowed the intoxicating poison of fame, and had not “force of natural health” to cast it out. Edinburgh celebrity contributed largely to the ruin of Burns ; applause, every one knows, inflated and befooled Rousseau ; Byron, unconscious perhaps of the fact, and in words scornfully denying it, was really the slave of fame,—one might almost say, of mode ; and to what length might the list not be extended ? There is a masterly touch in Ovid’s description of Phæton and his unhappy ride. The chariot has just reached the zenith. Hitherto the aspiring driver has kept a tight rein, better or worse, with fair success. But now he looks from his imperial station on the vast round of the earth ; its oceans, its forests, its mountains, its cities, are outspread below him ; all seem to gaze towards him, and drink glory from *his* eye. He cannot endure it ; his brain

reels, his eye swims, the weight of his office oppresses his individuality, the fire-snorting coursers drag the reins from his relaxing hand, and tear away after their own mad will. The man who can see the world gazing on him unmoved, is the man intended by nature to be looked at ! Chalmers triumphantly bears the test. Let the world say what it will, he knows he is just Chalmers of Kilmany, neither more nor less, —one whose power, be it what it may, neither inflates nor collapses in the popular gale. All who approach him find him simple, unassuming, devout. Nay, his instinct of reality is rather offended than otherwise ; his heart whispers that much of this tumult is mere vocal vacancy. As principalities and powers cluster round him, he stands quiet and self-possessed, unabashed, unastonished, unalarmed ; his greatness has its source within. No man could more thoroughly weigh popular acclaim, and more firmly pronounce it wanting ; beautiful ardours and rapturous admirations would have been somewhat damped in London, had his ultimate definition of such matters been by any chance heard—"the hosannahs of a drivelling generation !"

One other remark must be added, ere we accompany Chalmers back to Scotland. There was a day when he spoke of "literary distinction" as his "pride and consolation ;" there was a day when this London notoriety would have appeared to him almost sublime. Is it unfair to suppose that the light of that eye which, though invisible, he now seems ever to see resting on him, has shed an equalizing radiance over chancellors and peasants, and made sublunary approbation a matter of quite secondary moment ?

Returning to Glasgow, his popularity continues at the same unprecedented height as before ; his study becomes a presence-chamber for guests of all ranks and from all quarters. But it is never through the general eye that you can really see Chalmers ; it is when you mark him unbosoming him-

self, in tender, artless affection, to his sister Jane, or warming the hearts of all around him by his hearty geniality and rough sagacity, or turning from the despised "popularity of stare, and pressure, and animal heat," to look for any plant which the Lord of the vineyard has honoured him by using his hand in planting.

Of his life in this inner circle, we have an illustration which is too beautiful and of too profound significance to be omitted ; he who cannot read in it the true nature and the intrinsic nobleness of Chalmers can interpret no biographic trait whatever. A gentleman named Wright, an intimate acquaintance, meets him one day in company. Usually the centre of cheerfulness and pleasure, Chalmers is to-day downcast and heavy. Mr Wright, happening to walk with him on the way home, ventures to inquire whether he is ill. He is well enough, but must confess he is not at rest. His heart is grieved. "It is a matter," he says, "that presses very grievously upon me. In short, the truth is, I have mistaken the way of my duty to God in at all coming to your city. I am doing no good ; God has not blessed, and is not blessing, my ministry here." He remembers Kilmany and its one hundred and fifty families ; he thinks how sure and how beautiful the work of God was there ; he has exchanged his earnest ministrations from house to house, for inevitable and perpetual visits of ceremony or entertainment ; his parish church, filled with devout and humble hearers, for a mixed and staring throng, many of whose members come to see the preacher. It is like going from reality, which he loves as his heart's blood, to hollowness and pretence, which he hates with inborn and immeasurable hatred. His heart sinks at the idea, that in his hands the work of a Christian pastor should degenerate into emotional excitement or literary admiration ; that his portion is to be mere earthly renown, instead of the glory of having turned even one to righteousness. His eye is where a Chris-

tian pastor's should be ; fame, adulation, popularity, will, he knows, be shrivelled up in the first breath of eternity ; while an immortal soul, saved by his means, will be a gem in a crown eternally brightening. In friendly simplicity and greatness of heart, seeking the relief which every noble nature finds in sympathy, he reveals his sorrow to his friend. And, lo ! he finds in his answer a solace which he little expects. Mr Wright details to him a case in which he knows the ministry of Chalmers to have been effectual in rousing a soul to deep personal godliness, in making it flee to Christ for salvation. " Ah," exclaims his delighted and grateful listener, " Ah, Mr Wright, what blessed, what comforting news you give me ! for really I was beginning to fail, from an apprehension that I had not been acting according to the will of God in coming to your city."

We have still, however, to contemplate Chalmers in his principal aspect as a force and influence among men. That which, in our estimation, gives to his career its highest grandeur, and ranks him with the great ones of time, is the tremendous power with which he grasped one vast idea ; the idea of Christianity in application to national existence, the idea of the Christianization of the State. To use his own magnificent words, the aim of his life was to nurse the empire to Christianity. It is fine to see, as it were, his great heart throbbing with this sublime conception ; to mark how his enthusiasm always gushes out afresh as it comes before him ; to listen to the incidental tones of lyric rapture which break from his lips, when the light of the mighty thought, as of the coming Christian morning, strikes along his brow. This is the idea which makes the life of Chalmers epic. The nineteenth century is marked by the triumphant march of science on the one hand, and by the awakening of the peoples on the other. Banners innumerable have been unfolded as banners of national salvation : there has been the cloudy en-

sign of transcendentalism ; there has been the standard of mere science and political philosophy, with its meagre diagrams and cold metallic lustre ; there has been the black flag of atheism : Chalmers, with the gait of a champion, stepped forward with the ancient banner, the old legend still burning on its massive folds as in letters of golden fire, "In Christ conquer !" Round that banner, in the age of science and democracy, he called us to rally, and told how the fight would go.

But it was not only the dauntless valour and tireless perseverance with which he proclaimed that Christianity alone can save the nations, which distinguished him. These might have characterized a very inferior man. It was his clear perception of the position in which Christianity now stands to peoples, it was his essential agreement in the axioms on which he proceeded, with the soundest and greatest intellects of this and all ages, it was his statesmanlike comprehension of the main outlines of the method by which Christianity is to be applied to national life, that stamped him as the highest practical Christian thinker of his age. Of an intellectual power which enabled him to sum and master the lessons science has taught, and the means science has provided, for the amelioration of the community, he was able to discern what place Christianity may occupy in relation to these. Agreeing with all the master intellects among men, that it is only by the inspiration of moral life into a nation that its physical life can prosper ; and differing from Mr Carlyle only in that he deemed the one source of moral life a personal God, and the grand instrument of moral life the religion of Jesus, he yet did not turn with contemptuous indignation from the advocates of special scientific methods ; he took the different plan of supplementing their deficiency, of speaking the truth without which their systems were dead. He did not, with indignant stamp of his foot, shake to pieces as



worthless the mechanism of science ; he said it was an invaluable, an indispensable mechanism ; but he brought a coal kindled in heaven to put it in motion, to inspire it with life, to spread over it a new and glorious light. In language of glowing poetry, he represents Christianity visiting earth from the celestial realms, her first and all-embracing object to bring to men treasures of immortal joy, yet, by a sublime necessity, scattering beatitude in the paths of mortal life. With the ancient heroic devotion, he toiled for the realization of his idea ; no old crusader or mediæval king strove more valiantly in faith or in patriotism than he, to be the Christian divine demanded by the nineteenth century. If it is the harmonizing, concentrating might of one great idea pervading a character and life, which is recognised as imparting to these an epic grandeur, surely we can affirm such of the life and character of Chalmers.

With the glance of one who sees before and after, far along the centuries past and future, the high aim of Chalmers was, by one gigantic impulse, to raise the Church of his country to what the nation and the age required. Town and country he would divide into manageable parishes ; the Presbyterian mechanism of the Kirk-Session he would bring to bear with its innate power and intimacy ; over all would preside a set of godly and energetic pastors, who would superintend and vitalize the whole. Thus, in a thousand streams, the very water of life would circulate through the veins of the nation. A personal intimacy and friendship would bind pastor to peasant, rank to rank ; “the golden chain of life” would be unbroken, and it would be none the less beautiful, binding, or pleasant, that it was anchored within the veil. Over the land there would pass the breath of a moral renovation ; every other renovation would follow in benign and natural sequence ; it would look to heaven with one broad smile of peace and contentment, like the face of a strong man awakening to health after long sickness.

His method of carrying out his plans in his own parish, the example he offered to the pastors of Scotland and the world of their efficacy, was perhaps the most triumphant portion of his whole acting in the matter. Here it is important to observe him ; new discoveries of his intellectual energy and his moral worth dawn on us at every step. We saw formerly that, in the meeting of all the winds of fame, he could preserve unfluttered his self-estimate, and work as calmly as in quiet Kilmany. He could stand alone. We learn now that he can draw others around him, work with them, and teach them to work. Here it is that the true kindly talent comes out. He knows the genuine worker, he attracts him towards himself, he strikes into him new fire ; he can light a sympathetic flame in the bosom of each with whom he acts, so that he becomes a miniature of himself. Everything yields to his contagious energy ; the very Town Council of Glasgow assent to his views ; his subordinates follow him as the carriages follow the steam-engine. Chancellors and duchesses, and the tumult of crowds encircling Chalmers, might be gadflies round a sunflower ; but we cannot be deceived here. Look upon him in the heart of Glasgow, as he dives into noisome vennels, or feels his way up dark winding stairs, seeking out destitution, seeing the fact in its own nakedness, looking his foe in the face, and bringing to smite it that one weapon he bears, the sword of the Spirit. Then you see Chalmers. And his great experiment prevails : Christianity, with Chalmers and the Kirk-Session he directs as its instruments, is found to meet every social want in the populous and difficult parish of St John's.

It is well known that Chalmers was during his whole life an implacable enemy of the English poor-law. In the fundamental proposition on which he based his opposition, that a poor-law endangers the feeling of independence, and consequently the morality of a people, by converting the petition

for an alms into the demand of a right, he has been agreed with by men of the most directly opposed character and opinions, and of the highest intellectual powers. The acknowledged master in the schools of political economy, David Ricardo, records his emphatic opinion to this effect ; his shrewd and cool-headed disciple, M'Culloch, pronounces the poor-laws "essentially injurious,"—an opinion, by the way, which renders highly astonishing his estimate of the efforts made by Chalmers against them. At the distance of a hemisphere, both in thought and sentiment, from these men,—they, as it were, in Polar cold and bareness, he in tropic thunder and luxuriance,—Mr Carlyle has expressed the same opinion. Whether these authors have been quite correct or no, I do not undertake to determine ; Dr Alison adduces a fact or two which tell strongly in an opposite direction ; the point to be noted is, that Chalmers here stood by no means alone, that his belief on the point has been treated as an axiom by such thinkers as Ricardo and Carlyle. He declared that the only sound and safe method was that of nature ; and he pronounced Christianity able to hold up the hands of nature, and strengthen her to attain the desired end in her own fair and salutary manner. To the argument that the support of the poor, if left to voluntary effort, would fall entirely on the benevolent few, he replied, that, if things were properly managed, *every* parish would be able, without strain or inconvenience, to support its own poor ; he might have added (perhaps, though I do not remember meeting the remark in his writings, he has added), that Christianity makes it a privilege to stretch out the hand of charity, and that this act of the benevolent may be intended as a continual rebuke of the world's selfishness, and protest against it. To the assertion that benevolence could not be depended upon, he replied, that he trusted solely neither to benevolence nor to any impulse of a fortuitous character ; but to known principles of

human nature ;—the desire to rise, the sympathy of friends, on the side of the poor ; and on the side of philanthropy, the unfailing bounty of at least a chosen few. The machinery he provided is thus described in his own words :—“ We divided the parish into twenty-five parts ; and, having succeeded in obtaining as many deacons, we assigned one part to each,—thus placing under his management towards fifty families, or at an average about four hundred of a gross population. We constructed also a familiar or brief directory, which we put into their hands. It laid down the procedure which should be observed on every application that was made for relief. It was our perfect determination that every applicant of ours should be at least as well off as he would have been in any other parish of Glasgow, *had his circumstances there been as well known*,—so that, surrounded though we were by hostile and vigilant observers, no case of scandalous allowance, or still less of scandalous neglect, was ever made out against us. The only distinction between us and our neighbours lay in this,—that these circumstances were by us most thoroughly scrutinized, and that with the view of being thoroughly ascertained,—and that very generally, in the progress of the investigation, we came in sight of opportunities or openings for some one or other of those preventive expedients by which any act of public charity was made all the less necessary, or very often superseded altogether.” Here there is really nothing Utopian ; rather is there a deliberate and accurate calculation of means, measuring of resistance, and mastering of details. With so many inspectors, it is difficult to see how destitution could be overlooked ; with so many to scrutinize and investigate, it can hardly be conceived that any natural channel of relief, by the obtaining of work or of assistance from relatives, could be unnoticed ; with so many to inform and appeal, it would be no easy matter for benevolence to fall asleep. And then, as has been said, he proved it ; amid

difficulty, obstruction, and without putting out all his force, he succeeded to the full ; every objection and sneer was at last silenced, save one. He could not shut the mouth of the gainsayer when it was alleged that, to render the machinery effective, there would in each case be required a Chalmers.

If other men despaired of the power of Christianity to heal and beautify the nation, was it not right, and noble, and valiant, that Chalmers should not do so ? His belief was no empty sound, no half-hypocrisy. The religion of Jesus, he said, has all its ancient power ; for the mechanic dispensings of a great lifeless reservoir, walled in by the State, it can give the sweet watering of nature's gentle rain ; where Law can but order relief with her iron tongue, it can set Pity by the bed of national weakness, to hallow the ministries of Mercy by their own native smile. There was a great fund of hope and valour in his breast ; he would not despair of the commonwealth ; he would not sit slothfully down in what was at best a mere negation of evil, and whose occupancy deferred the real good. The worst you can say of him here is actually and without paradox the best which could be said ; for it is that which is to be said of all the noblest of the sons of men, and which is the crown of their nobleness, namely, that they looked forward to a brightened future, as that in which it would be good, and, as it were, natural, for them to live and expatiate ; that they seemed to be messengers sent before to herald a better time, and that the mode in which they delivered their unconscious prophecy was a summons, burning with earnestness and *hope*, to all men to arise and inaugurate the new era now. Chalmers could not find his rest in

“ The round  
Of smooth and solemnized complacencies,  
By which, in Christian lands, from age to age,  
Profession mocks performance.”

He dared the original attempt to infuse the spirit of Christianity, like vital sap, into the national frame ; he aspired to

shake off from the Christian peoples that mournful sleep,—of custom, of routine, of worldliness,—which has ever, with gradual, but hitherto irresistible influence, closed the national eye, that seemed erewhile to be opened wide and kindled with empyreal fire. This is the heroic aspect of his life ; his endless battle against mere respectability and commonplace ; his valiant and life-long endeavour to set Christianity on the throne and in the heart of the nation. He is the modern Christian ; shutting his eye to nothing, acquainted with every contemporary agency, but declaring that Christianity is still able to marshal every force, and meet every requirement in social existence. And let it be boldly said that he here pointed the way in all reform which can be regarded with perfect satisfaction and unfaltering hope ; if he failed, we must just raise the same banner, and, with somewhat of his ardour, still calmly and dauntlessly bear it on : the life of Chalmers was a proclamation of the world's last hope.

In at least the special forms in which he himself had striven to reanimate the nation with Christian life, he did fail. For long years he travelled, and wrote, and argued for Church extension ; year after year he looked to every quarter of the heavens, if perchance a gleam of hope against pauperism might cheer his eye. But the day of his life drew on to a close, and the work was yet to do. Then he withdrew into his closet, and in silent heaviness of heart penned the following words ; they are to be found in Dr Hanna's last volume :—

“Sabbath, December 12, 1841.—The passage respecting Babel should not be without a humble and wholesome effect upon my spirit. I have been set on the erection of my Babel—on the establishment of at least two great objects, which, however right in themselves, become the mere objects of a fond and proud imagination, in as far as they are not prosecuted with a feeling of dependence upon God, and a supreme desire after his glory. These two objects are the

deliverance of our empire from pauperism, and the establishment of an adequate machinery for the Christian and general instruction of our whole population. I am sure that, in the advancement of these, I have not taken God enough along with me, and trusted more to my own arguments and combinations among my fellows, than to prayers. There has been no confounding of tongues to prevent a common understanding, so indispensable to that co-operation without which there can be no success; but without this miracle my views have been marvellously impeded by a diversity of opinions, as great as if it had been brought on by a diversity of language. The barriers in the way of access to other men's minds have been as obstinate and unyielding as if I had spoken to them in foreign speech; and, though I cannot resign my convictions, I must now—and surely it is good to be so taught—I must now, under the experimental sense of my own helplessness, acknowledge, with all humility, yet with hope in the efficacy of a blessing from on high still in reserve for the day of God's own appointed time, that except 'the Lord build the house, the builders build in vain.' ”

The spectacle of Chalmers, as he pens these lines, is assuredly the most sublime afforded by his life. The very health and tenderness of childhood are in the heart of the old warrior; he brings his sword, and lays it down at eventide, willing, even with tears, to acknowledge that it is because of the weakness of his arm, and the faithlessness of his heart, that the enemy has not been vanquished.

Of the causes of this ultimate failure, which, however, might be a failure more in appearance than reality, it is unnecessary to say much.

If there was any great supplement to be made to the general system of Chalmers's thought and opinion, it was an adequate sense, on the one hand, of the difficulty of his enterprise, and, on the other, of the chief and indispensable

means by which it could be accomplished ; on the one hand, of the impotence of mere machinery, and, on the other, of the extreme rarity and inestimable worth of true and mighty men. It is an invisible force that is wanted, rather than wheel-work ; the latter will be provided with comparative ease ; the most elaborate machinery, without this living force, may hang vacant in the winds, like a rattling skeleton where once was the throb of life and the flush of health. The Church-state of Arnold—kings and senators teaching wisdom and doing the bidding of God, the powers of evil aghast at the new vision of Christian unity and love ; the manageable parishes, and country studded with churches, of Chalmers ;—alas ! one must cast a questioning, or at least a warning, glance towards all such schemes. The universal Church, that looks so fair in the distance, of which all the formerly separate churches are but pillars, all within whose walls are true Christians, all without whose walls are Pagans ;—can we look long at the imposing structure without seeing, as if emerging from beneath its crumbling battlements, a great whited sepulchre, uniform—as death ? A country filled with clergymen, a church in every street, a parish in every valley ;—must we not here also proclaim that danger impends ? In our crossgrained world, every good thing has a counterfeit which is doubly evil : self-respect, recognised as indispensable to completeness of character, is aped by impudence and conceit ; politeness, one of nature's fairest and costliest flowers, which can grow only in a rich and kindly soil, is mimicked by etiquette, a poor gumflower ; sanctity, the attribute of the sons of the morning, may, by human eyes, be confounded with sanctimoniousness spurned of devils. And it is a well-known law that the nobler the thing is the baser is its counterfeit. A hypocritic smile, a traitorous kiss, are worse than a scowl of honest hate or a stab of open vengeance. If, then, a godly minister is an angel of light, a



godless pastor is a very angel of darkness. Between the real Christian pastor, whose worth cannot be summed, and the indolent, greedy, black-coated loungeur, who burdens with his maintenance, who blights by his example, who is a continual living profanation of what is holiest, there is but an invisible difference. Get your men, and all is got. A Brainerd finds himself a congregation among North American Indians; a Schwartz, among the swamps and fevers of the Carnatic; but churches will not by any natural necessity attract ministers. This immovable fact we must always take along with us. Chalmers, no doubt, knew it, and it will ultimately, as seems probable, be found that it was by acting on individual men over the country that his influence was most powerful: but he did not grasp it in all its mighty import, and make it consciously and avowedly the basis of his operations: one man alone has proclaimed this doctrine in all the emphasis which is its due—Thomas Carlyle. Ah! what a prospect might we have had now had Carlyle and Chalmers toiled side by side in the Church of Scotland! Let us not, however, deem that we shall be sinless if we neglect the truth to which each has called our attention.

After four years' incumbency in the parish of St John's, Chalmers removed, in November 1823, to St Andrews, to fill the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University there. His main reason for quitting Glasgow deserves notice. His experiment in the parish of St John's silenced, as was said, all objections but one. This one was the determined assertion that the whole success was due to the eloquence and energy, in one word, to the individual character, of Chalmers. It is fine to see how this galls him. He exclaims against the "nauseous eulogies" which would turn into an empty compliment to him the demonstration of the power of Christianity. But it is vain to argue: the one reply they make to every appeal is, St John's parish is worked by Chalmers.

What can be done? The following are his own words :—  
“ There was obviously no method by which to disabuse them of this strange impression, but by turning my back on the whole concern ; and thus testing the inherent soundness and efficacy of the system by leaving it in other hands.” And so he goes to St Andrews ; let the cause prosper, whatever may become of him !

In 1828 he is inaugurated as Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh,—an office he continues to fill until within a few years of his death. Over his students he exercises the same powerful and benign influence which he has shed on all who have come within his sphere. His prelections tend to produce godly and ardent pastors, rather than nice controversialists ; he is, though not so named, the greatest among professors of *Pastoral Theology* ; his spirit goes over Scotland incarnated in young, vigorous, aggressive Christian ministers.

We now approach that epoch in the life of Chalmers during which, for the last time, he was to act a great and prominent part before the eyes of men. Within the circle of his sympathies and the ken of his powers he had embraced all the leading interests of the empire ; with a gigantic and hallowed energy he had striven to reanimate them by an inspiration of divine fire. And with a certain hopefulness, which, though damped by opposition, could not altogether die, he had ever looked to the endowments and machinery of that Scottish Church which he loved with the double affection of patriotism and pride. Whether it came of the substantial and practical nature of his intellect, or whether it arose from his deep loyalty and conservative tendencies, he was a decided and inflexible advocate of religious establishments. But, with the views of a statesman, he was also a divine. Never for a moment did he conceive the unchristian idea that it was State support which gave existence or

power to a Church. The doctrine of the distinct existence of the Church of Christ he grasped with all the firmness of his powers, and discerned with all their clearness ; whatever his faith in the efficacy of Christianity, it was in a Christianity not the bonds slave of man, but the messenger of God.

It is, of course, unnecessary to detail in this place the various stages of the controversy which preceded the celebrated Disruption of 1843 in the Scottish National Church, or to define, with precision and in detail, the argumentative positions taken by the respective parties. It were, however, unpardonable altogether to shun the question. Chalmers acted a part therein too prominent to render this permissible ; while the movement itself bears closely on one of the main general objects of this little work, the ascertainment of the actual power and practical availability of what names itself Christian principle in our age.

To speak in a way that may look somewhat pedantic, we have to discover, as the essential points in the matter before us, the idea of a State, the idea of a Church, and the relation between the two ; wherein each of these,—the State, the Church, and the relation,—essentially consists.

It is a fundamental axiom in the whole discussion, that the glory of God is the end and intent both of Church and State. The arguments adducible by reason to prove that the end of individual existence is God's glory can be brought, perhaps without exception, to prove the same fact in the case of governments. But let no rash conclusions be drawn from this all-important declaration. Every man works for God's glory when he performs the peculiar task assigned him by God ; it may be implied in his thorough discharge of this task, that he *abstain* from all other efforts and functions, however plausibly he may be invited thereto ; and the remark applies equally to all beneath the government of God.

This axiom laid down, we have to take but one step, when the whole matter clears up before us. Man's nature, individual and social, is twofold, spiritual and physical. That he has a physical nature, that he is a denizen of earth, and has to work that he may live, no argument is required to prove. That his nature also is spiritual, that, as a spirit, he is connected with a system of things not terrestrial but celestial, not temporal but eternal, is attested by reason. Here, too, nothing more is strictly necessary than a simple statement of the fact.

Broadly contemplated, the Church is a union among men, considered as spiritual beings, and for spiritual ends, and the State a union for objects of a strictly terrestrial nature.

Has God appointed to Church and State, thus broadly discriminated, respective duties? And what are they?

The function of a State, viewed in the relation indicated, is confined to terrestrial matters. A government is, as it were, God's commissioner to see that the national farm be thoroughly tilled. The State's object is to render itself safe from without, and, to express all in one word, prosperous within. This does not exhaust its duty in relation to other States, but it comprehends all its duties towards itself. And for the attainment of this object what is necessary? It is needful, in one word, that the *national virtues* flourish. For safety, it is requisite that the people be courageous, sober, observant of an oath; for prosperity, it is necessary that they be industrious, so that the nation collectively may derive the greatest possible benefit from its soil, climate, and mineral wealth, and that they be commercially upright, so that the rights of all may be balanced, and the general welfare subserved. A government prevents internally every form of *aggression* by man on man; this last is the precise, scientific definition of *crime* in a nation. There is a morality whose exclusive theatre is earth; there is an integrity between man and man which supports

commerce ; a national steadfastness and industry which avert revolution ; a loyalty, a patriotism, a valour, which girdle the State as with bayonets. These constitute work sufficient for any body corporate.

There are men who consider such achievements as have been glanced at above, and the general morality indicated, to be all which can concern men and nations. Atheistic morals are by nature and necessity confined to such. A man might remain immaculate, on the system of D'Holbach, or Godwin, or Comte, though he had never believed in or heard of a God. In all such systems, man's whole duties are his duties to man.

But, if we believe that man is even now the denizen of a higher world than that of sense, if we attribute reality to a spiritual province of things, a morality and a government different from these are seen, in natural and inevitable sequence, to emerge. This is celestial morality ; and the body corporate which bears the relation to it which secular government bears to secular morality is the Church. All that a brother man is empowered to demand of another is, that he give him free and fair play for all his faculties, that he harm him not ; God may demand of a man that he be holy in thought, heart, and action ; terrestrial morality may be called harmlessness ; celestial, holiness. To profane the name of God may imply no harm to a fellow-man, but it may be an ' fraction of man's duty to God. The devotion of a certain time to the worship of God may or may not be of direct and obvious advantage to the community, but it may be required by God. In short, there may be a surveillance of man as a denizen of the spiritual world, as well as a surveillance of him as a denizen of earth. And so, by a sequence as strict as in the case of the State, a separate set of functions arise for the Church.

If we have been following correctly, though for a short way, the light of reason, it seems to have led us to the greater light of revelation. This teaches us that man at first was not a

fettered bond-slave, that he had not to purchase existence by toil, that he was not cursed with labour ; that sin deprived him of his spiritual birthright, condemned him to work that body and soul might remain together, and set Death over him as a ruthless taskmaster to keep him in the furrow. But it teaches us also that those higher regions, towards which reason wistfully but weakly looks, are real ; that we are spirits still ; that God is yet our King ; that immortality and spiritual joys may again be ours ; and that we even now exist in a system of relations which bind us to the spirit-world. Secular government has been rendered necessary by the fall ; the Church exists by virtue of the promise. Both of them, viewed from the stand-point of eternity, and regarded as separate systems of mechanism, are expedients, and both temporary. The State must cease to exist when men are purely spiritual, and mutual injury is impossible ; it will cease, as was formerly said, when justice and love shall have become one. The Church, too, viewed as a visible organization, will conduct men but a certain way ; it will vanish at the gates of heaven. It finds man in a condition of lapse and distemper, it aims to restore him to a paradisaical state : this done, it will pass away, enveloped in a cloud of glory. For the present, the duties of State and Church are discriminated ; neither is delivered from direct responsibility to God ; but the Church respects the first table of the law, the State the second.

A detailed proof from Scripture that the State has duties of its own is unnecessary ; and it would lead us too far to enter upon a detailed proof and definition from Holy Writ of the powers and duties of the Church. The general course, however, and nature of the evidence in the latter case may be at a glance apprehended. Either, with Whately, we might determine the powers which pertain of necessity to every corporation, and, showing that the Church is, by its Scriptural definition, of that nature, infer that these powers belong to

it. Or we might cite the express declarations of our Lord, by which He committed the power of discipline, the power, under Him, of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven, to His Church; declarations with which, whatever they mean, it cannot even be maintained that any terrestrial power can interfere, and whose meaning seems as clear and explicit as words can make it. And we might point, further, to the indubitable practice of the early Church; we might instance, as absolutely sufficient and conclusive, the case of the Church of Corinth. The authority of Paul as a preacher of Christianity will not be questioned by any to whom I now address myself; the fact that he points out the duty of expelling a certain member from the Church is not within the reach of cavil; and the whole nature and compass of the discipline of a Christian Church are unfolded in his general directions on the subject. In a word, it might be shown, by clear and conclusive arguing, that the early Christian Church exercised powers within itself according to a law given it by inspiration.

Any penalty inflicted by a Church will, of necessity, be purely spiritual. The offence committed is one against God; the punishment with which it is to be visited can have reference solely to Him. A physical punishment is, by the nature of the case, out of the question. If the member expelled or excommunicated laughs at the decree, it is, as respects visible suffering inflicted by men, null and void. It is true, indeed, that if the inhabitants of the country in which the decree takes effect are all Christians, and consequently attach weight to the displeasure of the Church, considerable discomfort must result from discountenance by his brethren. But this is a remark which applies to the working of every possible corporation.

Having now granted that the provinces of Church and State are severed, and having laid it down that the former,

in its requirements and penalties, has exclusive reference, directly or indirectly, to celestial morality, it may seem difficult for us to find any mode in which they can legitimately and beneficially be allied. In point of fact, however, this has become a simple matter. The State is bound to entertain the question, regarding every agency which may present itself, Does it further the views entertained, the objects aimed at, by the State? A careful attention may be needful here: truth in the matter lies close to error. It is one thing to ask, Will the Church, used as a mechanism by the State, promote State objects? and another to ask the absolutely distinct question, Will the Church, acting solely for its own ends and by its own laws, promote that morality which the State requires, and is appointed by God to require? The first is a question the Church of Christ dare not even listen to; the second is that which the State is bound to ask, and to which the Church may render a decisive answer, and one on which an alliance between Church and State may be reared.

It is perhaps not too much to say that we are here at the very spring and original fountain of all the errors, theoretic and practical, which have encumbered this subject; that by a distinct recollection and recognition of the separate provinces of celestial and terrestrial morality, and of the respective functions of Church and State, such errors would have been obviated. The Church, in virtue of its origin, by charter of its King, in the discharge of those duties which alone render it necessary and existent in the sum of things, concerns itself with celestial morality; with a morality which lies beyond the pale of human law, whose rejection may infringe no right of man with man, which is between man and his God. Reason, in its highest and purest moments, declares the province and functions of the Church to be real; the Word of God ratifies this decision, assigns the Church certain duties, and appoints for it a certain government. The



only offer it can or dare listen to from the State is one which will guarantee its action *as a Church*. Turning to the State, on the other hand, we find it answerable to God for the maintenance of the common weal ; and it is but another form of expressing this to say, that it is answerable for the promotion of those virtues on which the safety and prosperity of a commonwealth depend. When a Church comes before it, it has simply to inquire whether that Church, acting in the only way in which a Church can act, will promote public morality ; in other words, whether the promotion of celestial morality will further that other morality by which a State subsists.

And what answer is it right for a State to render to this question ? To omit a consideration of other cases, it is surely plain that a State and Church naming the name of Christ can satisfy each other here, so as to form an alliance, not merely of harmless, but of eminently beneficent nature. State and Church hold their powers from the same hand ; God has appointed them to perform different functions, but they are united by the bond of a common service. Their powers are co-ordinate, but they mutually assist and establish each other. The one grand argument to prove that the State ought to be in kindly alliance with the Church, ought to countenance, and to its ability support it, is this : That reason, history, and Scripture, blend their testimonies to show that religion is the only safeguard of a nation ; that love to one's neighbour can never nationally subsist, save as dependent upon love to one's God.

Observe how close truth here lies to error. The Church, forgetting that its province is essentially and exclusively spiritual, that its penalties can be terrible in the esteem of a man only in so far as he is a Christian and believes in its power with God (with the qualification formerly mentioned), oversteps its bound, and touches a man's terrestrial posses-

sions ; fines, tortures, slays him. This is an anomaly in nature ; no Church can have power to touch a hair of a man's head, or an ear of his corn. This error has taken form in a system which has not failed to illustrate its baneful effects, the system of Popery.

But in our day it is an error of a very different order which prevails. It is the error of regarding the Church as an organization to be looked on as primarily and directly subservient to the interests of State morality. This ignores celestial morality, and, by turning the Church into a system of police, positively annihilates it. A Church which should be merely a piece of State mechanism, is easily conceivable. It would simply relinquish its native functions as connected with celestial morality. A secular government desires that men be upright, and sober, and brave ; but it directly subserves no end of State that men believe in an everlasting reward and a heavenly King ; yet, if the Church has a distinct existence, these must be of capital importance for it. A Church is required to proclaim from her pulpits a morality immaculately pure ; Government may find, or imagine it finds, such morality reflect in no flattering manner on its own measures : nay, it may desire the advocacy of its measures, directly or indirectly, from the pulpit ; and so the process may go on extending and deepening, till the very essence and origin of a Church are forgotten. And yet, do not ideas, tending directly to this result, pervade society in our day ? Is it not a common notion among the members of our National Churches, that they are Churches in virtue of their connection with the State ? Is it not a fact that many excellent persons in our Churches, in the Church of England for instance, would apply the term of schism to a separation from the State ? As if the State made the establishment of England a Church, as if it could exercise no function apart from the State, as if it would be equivalent to its extinction as a

Church, to throw it again into the condition in which that of Corinth was when it received its doctrine from the mouth of Paul! Among the Dissenters, on the other hand, and in what may be called a negative form, the same idea has extensive prevalence. It seemed perfectly absurd to Foster to hear it asserted, as the Scotch Non-intrusion party astonished him by asserting, that the State might endow, but could never regulate, a Church. As if, forsooth, the question of endowment or non-endowment were a vital, or even an important one, in the case! The grand question is, Whether the State is bound to sanction, countenance, and promote the Church; settle this affirmatively, and you have settled the question of an establishment: whether the form of support which consists in handing it a certain portion of money is sound and legitimate or not, is a different question altogether, and of very subordinate importance. To imagine that the acceptance of a certain form of support implied an abnegation of distinctive and essential power and existence, was surely an egregious error, and one which, fallen into by such an intellect as Foster's, indicated prevailing ignorance as to the real nature and functions of a Church.

It is not possible too severely to denounce this great heresy. A Church such we have seen men imagine for themselves would not necessarily turn men to God; it would merely preserve them in a state of respectability and loyalty. This is against the very idea of a Christian Church; if it becomes universal, religion, strictly speaking, is as good as dead in our Churches. The sister establishments may, doubtless, go on for a time; and it may even be deemed desirable by many without their pale that they should still continue to subsist. Evils there are which they may certainly obstruct. But if they become simply a part of the government mechanism for the quiet guidance of the nation; if they are to be primarily and undeniably hills of dead earth heaped on the Enceladus

of modern revolutionism ; if their strength is to be made up of the many who, having no religion of their own, take that which comes to hand with a government sanction ; if their members are to be, not Christians, but “ respectable persons ;” if their piety is to be, not the reverent upturning of the finite eye to the Infinite God, but a fluctuating accommodation to the religious fashions of the day—that goes once to church, or twice, as is the mode ; that subscribes to missions, and gets up sales for charitable purposes, or does not, as is the mode ; that has family prayers or not, as is the mode—then they may indeed remain for a time, and even do their work, and get their reward, but the first blast of millennial Christianity will sweep them utterly away. The Tyrians chained Apollo to the statue of Dagon, but Alexander laid their towers in the dust all the same ! Revolution is fearful ; the unchained masses, foaming maddened in atheistic frenzy, are fearful ; but Christianity chained in the temple of Mammon is the most fearful of all.

The principles now sketched, or rather the one principle of the separate existence and co-ordinate Divine origin of the Church, in perfect independence of the State, constituted the vital element in the long struggle which issued in the rending asunder of the Church of Scotland. To one out of the din of conflict, who contemplates the matter in the stillness of distance, the whole becomes absolutely plain. I shall by no means assert that there were no such obscuring or confounding influences around those who were parties in the debate, as to render it conceivable, and consistent with honesty, that they should oppose that view of the case taken by the party of Chalmers ; and, plain as it seems to me, that the question was one touching expressly the principles just laid down, there is perhaps no person now in Scotland who would refuse assent in terms to what has been said. Yet, putting the argument of the party which opposed the majority in the most

favourable light possible, what does it amount to? Suppose that the Church, in admitting the ministers of chapels of ease to a full and equal share in every ministerial function, *did* overstep the letter of its legal powers, and that the whole actings of Government towards it during the struggle were influenced by this consideration, how does it affect the question? It seems merely to clear it up, and to bring it within a narrow compass. If a Church possess corporate freedom, we shall agree that it has those powers which belong by nature to a corporation. These we may as well take from Whately; no one will say he fixes the standard too high. Corporate freedom implies that the body in question has officers, rules, a power of discipline, and an authority to admit or exclude members. Now, when Chalmers in London declared the Church of Scotland free, it either was so in the above sense, or it was not. If it was, then it is but a statement of an obvious fact, that it was competent to it to admit the chapel ministers to its full membership. If it was not free, if Chalmers was mistaken, if, from any cause whatsoever, or in any circumstances, this right was called in question, it was necessary, at whatever expense, that it should be vindicated. It will be said that this act of admission on the part of the Church affected, indirectly but unquestionably, the civil rights of certain individuals. Be it so; provision has been made against the objection: if a time had come when civil rights, when endowment, in one form or another, interfered with the very life of the Church, the time had also come when it behoved that Church to declare, that its perfect severance from all endowment was, strictly speaking, of infinitely less moment than that there should remain the faintest doubt of its freedom. It is, besides, a well-known fact, that the Church, ere laying its endowments at the foot of the State, expressed its willingness to surrender all control over the money paid to those inducted into its parishes. That fatal

error, however, which has been noted, prevailed widely. Men deemed it something anomalous and unheard of, that a Church should receive money from a State, and yet possess a jurisdiction absolutely distinct from that of the secular government.

Chalmers, looking at the whole question with the eye at once of a statesman and of a divine, saw into its essence, and took his position accordingly. With no elaborate searching or arguing, his piercing eye flashed at once through all sophistry to the truth that the life of the Church was in danger. It was with a certain astonishment and sorrow that he fought his last battle. If ever there beat a loyal heart, it was in his bosom. Since the day when he wept in the garden which recalled the glories of Marlborough,—since the day he had enlisted in the volunteers, chaplain and lieutenant,—since the day he had invoked death to smite him ere his country fell,—he had ever loved kingship, and national steadfastness, and the dignity of an ancestral Church. He knew that the Church of his fathers was throbbing with spiritual life, as she had not done for two centuries ; he saw her missionaries going to the ends of the earth ; he saw her blooming into new fruitfulness at home, and casting her mantle over all the population. It was with dismay and amazement that he witnessed the infatuation of the Government ; that he listened to the unspeakable nonsense uttered about clerical oppression, Popery, liberty of the subject, &c. ; that he saw Conservatism in Scotland trying to get the tough old Presbyterian Samson, his hair grown after two centuries of weakness, to be a mere maker of sport for it. As he said of his parting from his dear sequestered Kilmany, there was tearing of the heartstrings there !

Yet shall we not say that there was something fine in the spectacle of Chalmers contending at the head of the Church of Scotland, for the fundamental doctrine that the Church of Christ owes its existence to no fiat of the State, to no dole

of public money, but to the word of its Master, and to that alone? That it was the duty of the State to support the Church, he held to be irrefragable ; but to make the Church, not a fire which it fed with fuel, but a machine which it regulated and worked, he saw to be a fundamental heresy. With a mind perfectly settled on the question, and with an intrepidity which his known and enthusiastic respect for constituted authorities rendered the more conspicuous and the more noble, he calmly yet unflinchingly contended. His hair was growing white, and a deeper stillness was settling in his eye, though the old liquid fire would at times gleam out ; his fame had spread over the old world and the new ; he had been flattered by the highest aristocracy of the land ; yet he was still the same devout humble Christian that he had become when first the light of God opened upon him at Kilmany ; he was still the same earnest worker as when he set Glasgow into a ferment of Christian philanthropy ; he was still the same tender-hearted personal friend who wept over the grave of Thomas Smith. His words, his writings, and, most of all, his example, had struck new vitality through all the borders of Christian Scotland ; and now, as the glories of eventide were beginning to encircle him, he saw around him an army of young ardent spirits, who, in their pulpits, preached Christ and Him crucified, and, in the assemblies of their Church, defended her rights with an ability and a persistency which astonished every party. The sun looks proudest in the evening ; and the cause of his grandeur is, that, ere he himself sinks to rest, a thousand clouds, which his light brightens into radiance and beauty, encircle and seem to escort him : so, when a great man draws to his rest, a thousand younger men, whose fire has been kindled by him, reflect his light and testify his power.

In the beginning of the summer of 1843, Thomas Chalmers and in all nearly five hundred ministers of the Church

of Scotland severed the connection which bound them to the State, relinquished every claim on its immunities, and re-constituted the Church in a state of freedom. Not abjuring the principle of an Establishment, but protesting that no Government sanction could stand in the room of that Divine authority which gave life to a Church, they parted from a Government which seemed ignorant of its nature, and claimed an authority paramount to that of its charter written by the finger of God.

The act of Chalmers and his followers requires no trumpeting, and none shall be attempted here. But it is a mere argumentative assertion, removed altogether from enthusiasm or exaggeration, that the Scottish Disruption, whatever minor opinions may be held regarding it, did evince that Christianity has a real and a powerful hold upon both the pastors and the people of Scotland in our day. I shall not insist upon much being made of this ; Scotland has little to boast of, and great cause for repentance ; but it would be a sin and a shame not to attach to it a real and august importance. In an age of respectability and commonplace,—in an age when the decorous, the established, the aristocratic, is still so revered and clung to by at least our middle classes;—a large body of men, well advanced in life, and many of them tottering under grey hairs, deliberately stepped from under the smile of power, deliberately risked their continuance as a Church, on the Christianity of the people and the blessing of God. Such events do not occur in the history of dead religions ; such phenomena cannot appear where religion is a doubt.

The whole spectacle of the Disruption, viewed in the relation borne to it by Government, is anomalous and amazing. Disencumbered of all incidental and extraneous entanglements arising from the civil rights of individuals, the power claimed by the Church of Scotland, ere demitting its endowment, was precisely that which is exercised by every Dissenting body in



the kingdom, and which it at once began to exercise on parting from the State. This circumstance alone appears sufficient to Isaac Taylor to stamp the conduct of the State as impolitic ; and, though far higher grounds than his may be taken in discussing the general question, the fact involves conclusive evidence that there was no ruling British statesman of the day capable of taking a strong original look at the matter. The sovereign power of Britain tore asunder a body of known loyalty, which sat enthroned in the affection of the mass of the people of Scotland, and whose influence could not but be pronounced, on the whole, promotive of public morality, for one of two causes : either because it would not permit the Church to do what every Dissenting body does, and what this body could not when disestablished be prevented from doing ; or because there was not ability and decision in its compass sufficient to disentangle and make short work with a few beggarly questions touching money matters. From this dilemma there is no escape. Into one of two errors, or both, it seems to have been impossible for British statesmen to avoid falling : into that of fancying that the Church claimed a Popish power, that it was going to erect a spiritual despotism ; to which, remembering that we live in the nineteenth century, and that all Protestant Dissenting bodies are thus spiritual despotisms, one may decline replying, as sheer and infantile fooling : or into that of affirming the Church to be a mere State police, paid, and, by natural consequence, superintended, by Government ; which has been already shown to imply an ignorance of the very conditions of the question,—a negation of the existence of a Church.

Chalmers was now becoming an old man. On passing his sixtieth year, he entered on what he called the Sabbath of his life, six working decades past. It was a beautiful thought, and showed how his great soul yearned, like all the

noble, for repose. Over the last years of his life there rests a still and pensive beauty, a soft radiance of Sabbath calm ; not unshaded by sadness, not unbroken by agitation, they are wrapped in peace and harmony by that effect which poet-painters ever love, the dawning, in the background, of infinite light. It was hard, with now aged limb, to leave that Establishment, from whose battlements, in the morn, and noontide, and hale afternoon of his years, he had looked with a glance of pride and satisfaction, such as lit the minstrel king's when he looked from the towers of Zion. It was, indeed, a high consolation that in Scotland there was still enough of "celestial fire" to organize and animate a free Church ; but his faith in Voluntaryism was not even yet absolute ; and the one grand idea of his life, the reaping of the great outfield, the diffusion of Christianity over all the land, seemed no longer realizable. That sadness which we saw to be characteristic of the close of the most memorable and precious lives, descended perceptibly, in the evening of his days, on the manly brow of Chalmers.

The general aspect of these years is of deep interest and instruction, and cannot but reward a few final glances.

While the member of an Established Church, the large heart of Chalmers had opened its gates to everything noble in Dissent, to receive and love it ; and now, when he was himself member of a disestablished body, his nature flung aside those constraining and cramping cords of sectarianism which seem inevitably to twine themselves, however insensibly, round men of particular parties and denominations. It was with a glow of generous and enthusiastic joy that he hailed the Evangelical Alliance ; as one in a fleet on a stormy sea, when morn was drawing on, might hail the streaks of that sun which was to extinguish the lamp in each separate vessel. And with a fearless and truly Christian cosmopolitanism, he threw out his sympathies in other directions. He

earnestly accepted a contribution towards the cause of humanity, whencesoever it came. He could stand immovable in his own belief, and yet hear words of instruction or monition from others whose opinions were widely apart from his : he could rest in his belief that Christianity, that the preaching of Christ crucified, could alone regenerate the world ; and yet he could hear, in the words of Mr Carlyle, the voice of God to the Churches, proclaiming that their indifference and their dormancy had left a breach to the enemy.

What a stirring gleam of Christian valour, too, in that determination, old as he was, to master German philosophy ! He is not the man to be afraid ; he will enter this untrodden region ; if any new seed, or fruit, or flower of truth has been found, he must know and possess it ; if any new form of error has appeared, he must go, like a brave and faithful son, to set it, yet another trophy, on Truth's immortal brow !

His intellect was now calm, comprehensive, sage ; his heart was fresh as with the dew of youth. He again read Shakspeare, Milton, and Gibbon. His re-perusal of the first of these furnishes a beautiful and characteristic trait. After a life of continual effort, of perpetual contact with men and things, after the world had done its worst upon him, both in applause and in censure, he still revelled in the aerial gaiety, the many-tinted summer-like beauty, the genial, though keen sagacity, of *Midsummer's Night's Dream*. Of Shakspeare's plays, that was his favourite. It is a very remarkable circumstance ; telling of a gentleness of nature, a kind gleesome humour, an exuberant unstrained force and freshness of intellect, surely rare among theologians. As kindred to this, and of still deeper beauty, we may regard his tender playful affection for his infant grandson. He writes to little Tommy with the perfect sympathy of one whom the world has still left guileless as a child ; he relates little anecdotes for his amusement ; tells him of birds' nests ; demonstrates

to him, with syllogistic conclusiveness, that it is a logical mistake to love his hobbyhorse better than his grandpapa, merely because the former is "biggest ;" he does not forget to send him toys when at a distance, he makes him feel himself quite a man as he stands beside grandpapa assisting him to range his books ; and, best of all, he leads him, by kind, winning, imperceptible ways, to the footstool of their common Father. The child of four, and the veteran of three-score, kneel down together alone, that the smile of God may light on both His children !

There is one negative characteristic which appears to be constant in men deserving to be called, in any right sense, great. They are perfectly free of knowingness ; of the light-sniffing, *nil admirari* mood, that trembles at the thought of a sneer ; they are more simple than other men. This was signally the case with Chalmers.

It is by looking at the inner life of Chalmers, at his walk with God, that we come to know and understand him. It is by knowing well what he was in his closet, that we can explain what he was in the world of men. The three reverences that figure so largely in Goethe's system were all found there ; with this difference, that the word and feeling of reverence were applied to no finite being, but only to the Infinite God. The "trust thyself" of Emerson, that "iron string to which every heart vibrates," was never shown in any better than in him ; but it was held, not as the whole truth, but as half of the truth, which could never become the whole. It was the self-trust of humility, not of pride ; it was the trust that knew the world, hanging, as it seems, on nothing, to be yet upheld by the hand of God ; it was the trust which felt nothing finite worthy to be feared, since a chord of love bound its possessor eternally to the very heart of God. He trusted himself ; as David, Paul, Luther, Cromwell, trusted ; but it was among the finite he did so ; before his God he lay

low. He trusted himself to face the world, but not to scale the universe. Christianity has furnished a greater number of courageous, iron-built men, than either philosophy or any religion besides itself can show ; but the sternest and greatest of them bowed the head to the Highest. Christianity leaves no place for cowardice, while it blasts the eye of pride. Chalmers was a man of prayer ; he was much alone with God. And how much is included in this assertion ! Did the world shout and adulate ? Its voice became silent and of little moment when the inner chambers of the heart were flung open before the eye of God, searching into the recesses of the soul, casting a ray of celestial pureness, in whose light motes, else invisible, were seen. Did the world rage and scorn ? Its frown became of small importance in the smile of God, its rage and tumult of slight avail, if the voice that called order out of chaos said, "Let there be light." The hallowing influence of habitual prayer pervaded his whole life ; to comfort in adversity, to strengthen in toil, to cheer in battle, to sober in victory. Humble yet courageous, weak yet strong, he saw himself filled with human frailty and human faults, yet he shone before the eyes of men.

The deep sagacity which had been ripening during a lifetime was true and sure at its quiet close. "The public is just a big baby !" What a profound and deliberate knowledge of society is here. And what a comparison ! A big baby ! a great, pulpy, lumbering thing, that could do nothing but squall ! Yet how he grasped to his heart any really noble and godly man ; even with a kiss, as Tholuck said in amazement ! The true individual soul, and the real hidden work, were still what he dearly loved. From the glare of observation he shrunk aside ; but you might have seen him in Burke's Close, in the West Port, at his old work, bringing Heaven's light into the hovel and the heart of the poor.

Taken all in all, Chalmers was a noble type of the Chris-

tian man. He showed how Christianity embraces and ennobles, but does not cramp or curtail, humanity ; how, in that Divine influence, all old things do indeed pass away, but leave no desert behind, for a fairer verdure springs, beautified by immortal flowers, and nourished from living fountains, in an inner world where all things have become new. The vital warmth which would pervade a system of society really Christian, can be but counterfeited and galvanically mimicked by worldliness ; Christianity extends her claim and dominion over everything, if it have the one characteristic of being good. From the breast of Chalmers all the counterfeits of worldliness were banished, but the goodly company of healthful human emotions, of noble human attributes, entered in their stead. The cold affectations, the hypocritic smiles, the mellifluous falsehood, the greedy complaisance, all the glitter by which fashion hides her heart of ice, never found any point of adherence in him ; but the manly and genial deference of true politeness, a politeness based on the essential equality in the sight of God of "all human souls," was truly his ; to peer and peasant he was the same self-respecting yet truly modest and courteous man,—no touch of trepidation, no tone of flattery, towards the one ; no "insolence of condescension," no patronizing blandness, towards the other. He loved genial mirth and a deep hearty laugh ; the simper of etiquette, the giggle of frivolity, were alike alien to his nature.

It is well, likewise, to remember, that his heart was ever kept warm and fresh by those gentle ministries which nature has appointed, and Christianity, of course, sanctions : by the tender influences of home, by the wife of his bosom, and the children whom God had given him. These are nature's general means, and doubtless they are, in general, the best, to preserve health in the whole system of thought, of feeling, and of action. The man who plays for an hour or two at bowls with his children, as his elder found Chalmers doing,

will not likely, with Godwin or any other, fabricate for you a world on philosophic principles, with ice figures going by clockwork for men, and painted in the highest style of art. Follow the ecclesiastic, or professor, from the debate or the conclave, into his own home ; there see him, in his warm arm-chair, with his three daughters near him, one shampooing his feet, another talking the sort of nonsense which she knows will set him into fits of laughter, and the third making up the perfect harmony, by playing the tunes of dear old Scotland ; can you apprehend narrowness or fanaticism in that man ? Will not that laugh shake out of the heart every taint of theological rancour, lift from the brow every shade of gloom, express that unromantic, unostentatious, unspeakable comfort, which fills a really Christian home ? These are drops of sweetness instilled into the very fountain of the life ; no wonder that the streams are clear, and musical, and bordered with flowers.

Those combinations in which nature most cunningly displays her power, and which give the rare and excelling character, were variously represented by Chalmers ; his mind was rarely complete and symmetrical. An eye to see, a voice to speak, an arm to do : few men have had all three as Chalmers. The strength that can stand alone ; the social sympathy that plants little grappling gold-hooks of love in all surrounding hearts : the receptive faculty to grasp the thoughts of others, to sift them, to compare them, to mete their power of light to reveal truth and of lightning to blast error, to make the world an armoury ; the independent and original energy by which nevertheless the character acts freely and naturally : the power of saying, deliberately and irreversibly, No ; the tenderness that often wept : reverence towards God, respect towards man, love towards all :—you can assert for him each of these.

The balancing of hope and apprehension is an important

consideration in the elimination of character. It seems, as was before remarked, a providential arrangement that hope generally prevails in the noblest and greatest minds. Chalmers was sunny in his whole nature. Fear plays a very slight part in his mental or external history. It had a small share in his conversion ; it was rather the conviction that the remedy needed for the world was deeper than he had formerly deemed,—that the holiness without which a man cannot see God was something above the virtue of philosophy,—which led to that great change. And in all his works there are cheerfulness, hope, courage,—no touch of despondency or misanthropy. Yet his mind was of no flimsy, romantic cast. He knew the world to be a stern reality, with ribs of rock and veins of iron, not to be softened and tamed into perpetual mildness and docility, by poet, pedant, or philosopher. He had enough of hope to make him work cheerfully and indefatigably ; he had enough of fear, of soberness and apprehension, to avert despair at the results of his work.

“ The king-becoming graces,  
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,  
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,  
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,”

were all in some measure his ; and in him they flowed from the only Source from which they can flow in strength and purity.

To give his radical characteristic in one word, Chalmers was, as man and as thinker, a great mass of common sense. He had a giant's grasp of the fundamental facts of man's existence, an inborn notion how this world is put together ; he was not the man to build you metaphysical palaces, mist skilfully tinted by moonshine, or to lead you, with clear small safety-lamp, through argumentative mazes ; but he had a profound consciousness of those unseen principles by which men actually live and work ; he was a man against whom a nation might lean. To use a comparison applied by himself in the



case of Edward Irving, he was a force of gravitation, not of magnetism.

And his books, which it is unnecessary to review, are distinguished in a manner correspondent to this. They were now round him in many substantial volumes, and more were to be given to the world after his death. They embodied that grand idea which lent sublimity to his life, the union of humanity with Christianity, the omnipotence, in the man and in the nation, of the gospel of Jesus. He is the king of *practical* theologians. Those books do not abound with learned disquisitions or erudite quotations ; but they take bold, broad views of man and his salvation, and they burn all over with the blended fire of lofty human emotion and lowly Christian faith. If you do not find in them the delicacies of a minute ingenuity, or the meagre exactness of logical formula, you meet with those great ideas which may be called the *key* ideas in systems of religion, ethics, and polity ; with which, if your hand is not specially weak, you can solve, far and wide, the practical problems of life. It has been objected that they are filled with iteration, and their style has often been called declamatory. There is doubtless something in the charges. But it should be remembered that Chalmers was by instinct an enforcer, a preacher of truth ; he would fling thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till he sent one fairly home ; he looked upon what he delivered, not so much as something for its own sake to be demonstrated, as what was to tell on the public mind, and be impressed upon it with that view. He wrote with the sound of the world in his ears ; every one of his books seems anchored to earth.

At last his earthly Sabbath came to an end. He had been in London, giving evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons. His intellect, as this evidence testifies, was still clear and strong ; and in private he was the same quiet but genial and hearty man that he had ever been. He visited

Mr Carlyle, and the two extraordinary Scotchmen had an acquiescing and cordial conversation, with "a great deal of laughing on both sides." He returned to Edinburgh about the time when the Assembly of the Free Church met ; on Friday, May 28, 1847.

On the Sabbath evening that followed, he was more than usually benignant and genial ; but a cloud might be seen to flit across his features, and, walking in the garden, he was heard, in low but very earnest tones, saying, "O Father, my Heavenly Father !" His general aspect, however, was one of cheerful and genial composure.

Next day, the May morning rose over Arthur Seat, and the Castle rock, and the spires and palaces of that lordly city which he loved so well. Men rose bustling after the Sunday rest, and the conversation in town would turn largely on the doings of the two Assemblies, and the appearance he was to make that day. But, as the hours wore on, a whisper stole over the city, stopping for a moment every breath : Chalmers was dead. One had entered his room in the morning, and found him motionless : "he sat there, half erect, his head reclining gently on his pillow ; the expression of his countenance that of fixed and majestic repose." The land mourned for him, as Judah and Israel mourned for the good kings of old.

THOMAS ARNOLD.

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ABOUT the beginning of this century, a little boy might have been seen playing in a garden at West Cowes, Isle of Wight. The name of Napoleon and the din and rumour of war filled the air around him ; his keen eyes brightened and sparkled continually, as they looked out upon martial pomp and preparation. The sight of the great war-ship entering the harbour, or bearing away to seek the foe ; the news of battle and victory ; the loud, loyal choruses of mariners, who stepped and looked with the consciousness of ruling the waves : these, mingling with the kindly tones and melodies of a Christian home, which softened every harshness and discord into a musical harmony, were the earliest influences to mould the mind of Thomas Arnold. Though naturally bashful, the child was yet, so to speak, intensely alive, in body and in mind. He got hold of Pope's Homer, and the many voices of war around him strengthened its influence ; it was one of his favourite amusements to enact the Homeric battles, with staves and garden implements for swords and spears, reciting, with a great sense of grandeur in the proceeding, the speeches of the heroes of Homer, that is, of Pope. At eight, he went to Warminster School, at twelve, to Winchester ; in each he showed sympathetic intensity of intellect, heart and head

acting strongly and in unison. He displayed great warmth in his boyish friendships. Ere proceeding to Oxford, which he did at sixteen, his information had extended widely. He had read Gibbon and Mitford twice, and was well acquainted with Russel's *Modern Europe* ; he knew also to a considerable extent the historians of Greece and Rome ; his bent, it was already manifest, was towards geography and history.

Arnold entered at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1811 ; it was an important epoch in his life, and his whole sojourn at the university is full of interest. The society in Corpus was select ; and during Arnold's career it embraced young men of a high and rare order ; such, for instance, as Whately, Heber, and Keble. He was an important member of the fraternity. He represented the healthful, well-balanced, daringly active English mind ; instinct with sympathies that passed beyond academic walls to expatiate in the wide world ; fond of poetry, and ardently affectionate, yet shrewd, discriminating, and burning his way through words to things. The air of Oxford was such as breathes through the Hall of the Past, and the great body of the students of Corpus, each in his several manner, loved and revered what was old ; but Arnold was for freedom and advancement, and rebelled against the genius of the place. Yet, one by one, the nobler of his fellow-students came to know him and to love him ; into one true heart after another he threw his invisible grappling-iron, and linked it to his for life. Corpus was a little senate in itself, where all the big questions of the day were discussed ; and Arnold was an active and vehement disputant. You can imagine him appearing at times even overbearing, but it was only when he was himself overborne by his subject. He could not hold an opinion by halves ; if it entered his heart at all, it was received with the warm welcome of hospitality, and defended at all risks. He was to be seen in the midst of a circle of the best men of Corpus,

combating valiantly and cheerily for his own views against them all. The logical arguer would urge the danger of cutting the moorings of society, and drifting off on the revolutionary sea ; but Arnold would answer that it was only Conservatism which transmuted harmonious change into colliding revolution : the Tory loyalist, whose father was in Parliament, might expatiate on the glories of the throne and the nobility, as the ramparts of a nation ; but he would briefly answer, I love the people, and feudalism was wrong in its very idea : and then, in mild accents, might Keble evoke a faint cloud of golden dust from the treasuries of the past ; and this he would summarily lay with some cold water from the wells of his favourite Aristotle. Yet his warm sympathies could not resist the strong and kindly influences of the place, and he became somewhat more Conservative.

Of his religious feelings during his abode at Corpus, we have slight information. His reading led him to Barrow, Hooker, and Taylor, and his heart was opened by natural nobleness to the more profound and enduring influence of Christian truth. His disposition was devout, his morals pure.

Altogether, the university career of Arnold is to be pronounced auspicious. If his scholarship was not what is technically called profound, it was yet thorough and comprehensive : he was not ignorant of words ; but that hungry instinct of reality within him, with which it was vain to contend, called resistlessly for things. He won the prize for two essays, Latin and English ; he became intimately and sympathizingly acquainted with ancient history ; and he drank in the wisdom of Aristotle with almost passionate enthusiasm. But the most benignant of all the influences which encircled him at the university, was assuredly the friendship of such men as Keble, Whately, and Justice Coleridge. These friendships were cherished by him during life with the earnestness of duty and the enthusiasm of love. It is a beauti-

ful and inspiring spectacle to behold the several friends, as from their respective stations they send kindly and life-long greetings to each other ; like vessels in one fleet sailing towards the dawn, that hang out lamps of signal and comfort, to point the way and break the darkness.

When about to emerge from the years of youth and education into those of manhood and performance, Arnold's mind became more deeply moved than it had hitherto been on the subject of religion. He remained at the university for four years after ceasing to be a gownsman. During these it was that his mind passed through a discipline of doubt, which finally resulted in the establishment of his character on a Christian basis,—in what he would have defined as his conversion. The precise stages of this all-important occurrence we are unable in his case to trace ; but his ultimate attainment was clear and decisive, the general method of his reaching it is perfectly ascertainable, and the lessons conveyed in it to similar inquirers, together with its testimony to the truth of Christianity, invaluable.

The special subject of his questioning was, as in the case of Foster, the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. His belief on the point appears to have been confirmed by two main arguments : first, that the attempts made by those who rejected the doctrine to find for their views a warrant in Scripture were the mere mockery of criticism ; and, second, that the abstraction to which deism gives the name of God, leaves all-unsatisfied in the human soul that sublime craving which is its distinguishing glory,—that yearning pain which finds solace only in communion with the Divine. In order to his finding the former of these arguments conclusive, it was necessary that he should consider the testimony of Scripture final in the matter ; and the question arises, What were the grounds on which he received the Bible as the word of the living God ? The answer which can be rendered,—not per-

haps given precisely at this period, and to be gathered, not from any declaration uttered at any one time, but from the tenor of his whole writings,—is singularly satisfactory. It is on all hands conceded that his historical acumen was piercing: his most obvious characteristics were clear shrewdness and sharp-cutting English sense; he had trained himself to investigate ancient writings by constant study from his boyish days of Greek and Roman authors; and, in the early vigour of his powers, he sat down at the feet of Niebuhr. He approached the Scriptures precisely as he did any other composition handed down from ancient times; he applied to them that criticism which separated the chaff from the wheat in Livy, and unravelled the intricacies of Thucydides; and he found conclusive evidence that they were the word of God. The reader may perhaps, in perusing the Biography of John Sterling by Mr Carlyle, have been struck with the effect produced upon the mind of the former by the perusal of Strauss's Life of Jesus. Sterling remarked, that, whatsoever men were going to, it was plain enough what they were going from; this German book, one is apt to conclude from his words, was to deal the final blow to all Christian institutions; the ears of the world, you suppose, are deafened with the rumour of it, the sky darkened by its mighty shadow. Of the same book Arnold wrote as follows:—

“What a strange work Strauss's *Leben Jesu* appears to me, judging of it from the notices in the *Studien und Kritiken*. It seems to me to show the ill effects of that division of labour which prevails so much among the learned men of Germany. Strauss writes about history and myths without appearing to have studied the question; but having heard that some pretended histories are mythical, he borrows this notion as an engine to help him out of Christianity. But the idea of men writing mythic histories between the time of Livy and Tacitus, and of St Paul mistaking such for realities!”

Thus it is that the matter appears to one really trained in historical induction. There is no "Coleridgean moonshine" in that eye! He sweeps through painted mist and carefully woven cobweb, right to the heart of the question. It is to no fond dreaming enthusiasm, very beautiful, it may be, but very weak, that he commits himself; he asks no aid from imagination, and he does not stop to inquire whether the plain fact, which his Saxon intellect demands, is given him by logic or by reason; he wants the fact itself. Grasping firmly, therefore, the hand of history, he finds his step at once on Judean hills; and he is surrounded by men who have the same hearts in their breasts, the same earth under their feet, as men in the nineteenth century. He fixes specially his regards upon Paul. He sees him trained in the school of Tarsus; he hears him, in calm, earnest, clear, persuasive words, disputing with Grecian sages; he notes that his opinions are so temperate that he becomes all things to all men; that his moral preaching is pure, mild, and thorough; that his zeal is stronger than death. He perceives that his every earthly prospect is blasted; his good hopes of advancement, under the smile of high priest and Pharisee, turned into certainty of bitter hatred; his life rendered one scene of hardship, danger, and poverty, by his belief in the Divine mission of a certain Teacher. He observes that he companies with men who declare that, a few years before, they saw this Teacher pass upwards into heaven, and had witnessed his raising of the dead while He went in and out among them. All is real, present, visible; there is none of the dimness of antiquity, the seclusion of mystery; these men sit there in Judea, unimpassioned, earnest, unanimous; there is in the whole scene no analogy the most distant to aught resembling a myth; the gospel they proclaim is love and truth; the danger they face is death; the motive they can have, on the hypothesis that they are liars, inconceivable; the life they lead, the unanimity of their



testimony, on the hypothesis they are enthusiasts, positive contradictions : as with a stamp of his foot he shakes the whole mythic theory to atoms as an absurdity, to accept which were a feat of credulity within the powers of no faith save that of infidelity. There is a fine precision in Arnold's instant selection of Paul, as affording absolutely conclusive means of vindicating the strict historic verity of Christianity. The leading facts of Paul's life, as eliminated in the *Horæ Paulinæ*, are as well established, on their own evidence, as those of the life of Calvin ; and if they are granted, not only does every mythic theory dissolve like a film of vapour, but the first links of a chain are taken into the hand, by which it appears scarce possible to avoid being led believingly to the feet of Jesus. Finding the historical evidence of the Divine truth of Christianity satisfactory, Arnold does not seem to have been able to doubt that Paul, John, and the other evangelists, do, with more or less explicitness, avow their belief in the divinity of Jesus. To this belief he was perhaps partially led, and in it he was certainly confirmed, by the second consideration which has been mentioned. It is exhibited in the following important passage :—

“For my own part, considering one great object of God's revealing Himself in the person of Christ to be the furnishing us with an object of worship which we could at once love and understand ; or, in other words, the supplying safely and wholesomely that want in human nature, which has shown itself in false religions, in ‘making gods after our own devices,’ it does seem to me to be forfeiting the peculiar benefits thus offered, if we persist in attempting to approach to God in his own incomprehensible essence, which, as no man hath seen or can see, so no man can conceive it. And, while I am most ready to allow the provoking and most ill-judged language in which the truth, as I hold it to be, respecting God, has been expressed by Trinitarians, so, on the

other hand, I am inclined to think that Unitarians have deceived themselves, by fancying that they could understand the notion of one God any better than that of God in Christ ; whereas, it seems to me that it is only of God in Christ that I can in my present state of being conceive anything at all." Strangely enough, a Unitarian writer of the day has quoted from this passage against the doctrine of the divinity of our Lord. Is it not rather to be considered the subscription of a singularly clear, healthful, and honest mind to that great fact of the human consciousness, which is the chief argument deducible from nature in support of the doctrine of the Trinity ? It is a virtual appeal to the testimony of history that deism has ever failed to take a real hold of the mass of mankind ; that, when strenuously pressed by dialectic, its deity has become a confessed inconceivability, the absolute nothing of Oken ; and that, when left to gain a footing among the body of a people, it has taken the thousand forms of polytheism. The noblest of the Grecian sages did not point at nothing when he longed for more light, and dimly shadowed the Christian Trinity ; even the brow of Plato grew sad under the infinite vault, filled, indeed, with a certain pale icy radiance, but having no Sun. Christ came to lift the veil of Isis ; to fix the lorn eye of humanity on a known God. Arnold, by his revering love of the Saviour, and the satisfaction which he declared he experienced for the highest and most profound longings of his soul in the worship of Him, testified that the Desired of the nations had come ; through Jesus he could commune with his God ; holding by the hand of Jesus, he could stand unconsumed, as it were, in the very blaze of the throne ; instead of an argument in support of Unitarian views, his words afford one more proof that there is between poor man, lying in troubled slumber on the world-desert, and his God, the precipice of an unscaled infinitude, if no ladder is let down, if no divine Saviour has come. The

end of all his doubt was, to use his own form of expression, his placing himself consciously under the banner of the Lord Jesus, his cleaving to Him, his reposing absolute trust in Him, his resolving to become His faithful soldier and servant to life's end. Then his mind became calm and strong ; he had, as he again says, "a security within, a security not of man, but of God."

Arnold now took orders in the Church of England, subscribing to her formularies. He professed not to agree with these in all things ; he specially dissented from the Athanasian Creed. Of his views on these points he never made a secret, openly declaring that no interpretation of the clauses to which he objected in the creed just mentioned could bring them into accordance with his opinions, and defining his act of subscription to indicate merely a general sympathy with, and willingness to adhere to, the Church of England. In this he erred. I agree with Mr Greg in believing him to have acted with perfect honesty ; yet his mistake was serious. I shall not discuss the matter here, but I refer the reader, for its masterly treatment, to Foster's article on the Life of Paley.

Arnold settled first at Laleham, near Staines, with his mother, aunt, and sister, proposing to take pupils. Here he remained for nine years, his character gradually unfolding, his views becoming matured. He disciplined himself to thorough work, and thought much. His eye, during the period, turned with ever-increasing earnestness upon the great interests and questions of his age and country, and gradually every Conservative tendency which had attached to him at Oxford was cast off ; he became the determined, uncompromising foe of every form of worship of the past, or attempt to clog the progress of the present. His religion, too, went on deepening from year to year ; he drew closer and closer to God, and to his Friend and Saviour Jesus ; and, more and

more, the fruits of the Spirit beamed forth in thought, feeling, and action. At Laleham he married, and here six of his nine children were born.

At length Arnold was elected, in a marked and flattering manner, to the head mastership of Rugby. He was then thirty-three years of age ; in the very prime of life. He continued to occupy this post until his death, and here it was that he became so widely known and valued as a practical thinker and reformer. I shall endeavour to throw out before the eye of the reader a general picture of his life, for it is so alone that an adequate idea can be formed regarding it ; one or two of his more remarkable opinions may be thereafter specially considered.

The first look at Arnold's career reveals a very important circumstance, one which constituted a main element in his character, and exerted a great influence in moulding his career. It is impossible to regard him for a moment without perceiving the intensity of his physical life. This was conspicuous in his early days ; it continued to characterize him to the last. It made labour a positive pleasure ; it sent him to the mountain side with ever fresh delight ; it impelled him resistlessly to the work before and around him. Acting the Homeric battles in his father's garden, scampering over the fields at Oxford, bathing and boating with his pupils, he is ever the same intensely alive, joyous being. It is seen in his face ; he looks as if he were watching the moments in their flight, eager to grasp them ; his eye suggests that of the good Ritter Hagen of "the rapid glances ;" his lips are compressed and firm, as if closed after the utterance of one clear unalterable No, which Coleridge could not say ; there is strength in his firm unquivering cheek, in his iron brows, in his unwrinkled forehead. His intensity overthrows everything, even literary delicacy ; "I must write a pamphlet, or I will burst," he says : one sees him gasp with ear-

nestness as he utters the words. It is to be found, likewise, in his valour and open-faced independence. He longs to fight the Oxford men, "as in a saw-pit." And he has a clear sympathy for the nobleness of the battle-field, thinking no man can be of sound human feelings without sharing it.

Directing attention to the sphere in which this tireless energy worked, and the modes in which it exhibited itself, we are called first to observe Arnold as a teacher. Both in theory and practice he is here admirable. The objects he aimed at in education may be summed up in two words,—character, power. By the first of these is meant complete, self-estimating, self-respecting manhood ; by the second, that harmonious development of each faculty of the mind, that raising of each capacity into the condition in which it can naturally, healthfully, and perfectly perform its function, which is attainable by intellectual culture. He avoided, on the one hand, the fallacy, that a man is not fitly educated unless he is made master of the powers, I say not the acquirements, of a scholar ; that, for instance, a man of slight intellectual faculty, like Howard, may not be as thoroughly educated in character as a man of high intellectual faculty like Bentley ; he shunned, on the other hand, the far more palpable, but extremely common error, which surely has exerted an unsuspected influence in our modern educational improvements, that education consists mainly in conveying a certain amount of information into the mind.

This statement is embodied in two brief but comprehensive expressions quoted from Arnold by Mr Stanley : first, "If there be anything on earth which is truly admirable, it is to see God's wisdom blessing an inferiority of natural powers, where they have been honestly, truly, and zealously cultivated ;" second, "It is not knowledge, but the means of gaining knowledge, which I have to teach."

As his theory of education was philosophic in its sound-

less and width, his practice of tuition may be characterized in one word as marked by its totality ; it embraced him as a whole ; it was in his step, and eye, and tone, and much which cannot be even indicated ; the pupils saw that their teacher was a true man and Christian ; the grasp of his energy they felt upon them ; they knew not how, but the very air seemed pervaded by his influence.

That continual watchfulness and readiness of mind, that never-flagging energy, that clearness and compactness of knowledge, and that genial sympathizing insight into the youthful mind, which are demanded in the practical teacher, were his in unusual measure. And his success was proportioned to his merits. His pupils were inspired with a fine sympathy with himself in carrying on the business of the school ; accustomed to be treated as Christian gentlemen whose word was not to be called in question, they learned to shrink from meanness, to acquire self-command, and to make intelligence and nobleness their aims ; at the university, youths from other quarters might excel in the quickness, the cleverness, and, it might even at times happen, the minute accuracy, of school-boys ; those from Rugby had the character, the thought, the deliberate purpose, of men.

But the expansive energies of Arnold could not confine themselves to the school. Around him lay the world in a stirring and tumultuous epoch, with its questions to be answered, and its work to be done. He was not the man to be struck dumb by the one, or confounded by the other. Christian himself in every pulse of his being, believing in Christianity as a truth, knowing it as a life, and recognising its claim to pervade with its influence every province of human affairs, he bent all his energies to effect that reform which it professes its power to work in nations. Allusion is not now made to his particular views ; attention is called to his attitude and aim. These present a spectacle of Christian thoroughness

and valour which must stir every heart attuned to high impulses. He knows no fear ; he will listen to no compromise. To the world he seems even turbulent ; for he cannot breathe the same atmosphere with error, but must instantly unsheathe his sword, and rush against it : there is a flash of real war-horse fire in his eye ; he yearns for the battle. Words fall from him which a man may seize and treasure up as a sort of diamond-dust for whetting and burnishing his mental armoury. “ I do not understand how the times can help bearing what an honest man has the resolution to do ! ” The opposition of the wicked to Christianity and the Christian ministry he regards as satisfactory, nay, consoling,—the only testimony in their favour which it is in the power of such to give. He feels that it is a grand thing to fight the devil, when one’s mind is fairly made up as to the identity of the foe. “ The work here is more and more engrossing continually ; but I like it better and better : it has all the interest of a great game of chess, with living creatures for pawns and pieces, and your adversary, in plain English, the devil,” &c. This is a different attitude from Foster’s, though that, too, was sublime. Foster looked over the field where the forces of the enemy were ranged, and gazed into the eyes of their “ great commander,” with stern defiance, indeed, but with a tear of burning grief that the positions of the field were in his hands ; Arnold’s eye flashes right in his face with utter defiance, but also with a certain blasting gleam of triumphant contempt ; he longs only to come to close quarters, and, with the sword and the shield given him from heaven’s armoury, to wrest the victory from the prince of the world. It is always the word “ onward ” that he speaks ; it is ever higher that he will have the banner float ; God and the angels may be spectators ; but, for us, up, brothers, and at them !

Arnold was singularly true to that type of character which

is recognised as in a peculiar sense English ; he embodied its indomitable energy, its unpretending honesty, its practical sense. In doing work he will be unmatched ; but he must clearly see what is the work to be done. When he reaches the Gallic invasion in his Roman history, he must commence the study of the Erse language ; but he never finds his footing sure among the abstractions of metaphysics, or even of mathematics. He attacks the evil that lies to his hand. He prefers in conversation a man who differs from him to one who agrees, because some work may then be done, and they end not exactly where they began. He claims no right or power to rule the empire of the air, and radically lacks the faculty of building air-carriages for a lifetime. "Before a confessed and unconquerable difficulty his mind reposed as quietly as in possession of a discovered truth."

In strict and beautiful accordance with the general firmness and health of Arnold's distinctively English character, was the love of nature which he displayed. It was not that sympathy which gives full occupation to the soul, and becomes the business of a life ; which casts over nature a spirit-woven web of sentiment and phantasy, more faintly aerial and more delicately tinted than a veil of gossamer, and presenting to the eye such new and wondrous colours, that men gather round its possessor, and hail him a poet. He could not anywise sympathize with Wordsworth when he said, that the meanest flower that lives awoke within him thoughts that were too deep for tears. This, he felt, was a little too ethereal, the spire melting into the mist, the strong, clear glance of a manly love fading into the filmy gaze of one that dreamed. But perhaps none ever illustrated with finer precision that strong and healthful sympathy with nature, which is a desirable, if not indispensable, element in every complete and harmonious character ; that unaffected delight in the beautiful, which sheds a dewy and flowery freshness over earnest devotion to



the good, and wreathes with a green garland the brow that inflexibly endeavours after the true ; a power to hear, and to blend with the practical energy of life, those unnumbered lessons which are inscribed on nature's varied pageantry, and which we cannot doubt that God intended us to read. With the healthful, rejoicing, boyish affection of an intensely alive and happy nature, he expatiated in the magnificent home which God had hung out in the heavens for His creature man. He did not look upon it, as it is the duty and high privilege of the poet to do, with the feeling that it was his work to reveal its wonders, and, by a melody that leads captive every heart, to turn the eyes of men to behold it ; but he never ceased to look upon it with the eye of one who felt that he worked better in the consciousness that he dwelt in such a home, and knew that to the unstopped ear of man, as he proceeds on the journey of life, there arises from stream, and rock, and wood, and gentle fountain, a choral melody, to inspire to tranquillize, to gladden. It was the ordinary English love of fields, and hills, and sunbeams, raised to more than ordinary intensity. His eye kindles grandly as he sees the sun pouring his broad, bright, parting smile over the Grampians, seeming to "tread on thrones ;" he has watched the Alps at eventide, and remembers for ever the sublime appearance of their peaks "upon a sky so glowing with the sunset, that, instead of looking white from their snow, they were like the teeth of a saw upon a plate of red-hot iron, all deep and black ;" he has never done looking at the great running rivers, which he regards as the most beautiful objects in nature ; the wild flowers on the mountain sides are, he tells us, his music ; it is Arnold in his kindest, but not least characteristic aspect, that we see, as we mark him walking by his wife's pony in sunny English afternoons, watching every phenomenon of nature, and doubling his joy by the sympathy of his Mary.

To form an adequate idea of the nature of Arnold's reli-

gious life, it is necessary to conceive fully that which was its central point, his close, conscious, and ever realized union and friendship with the Lord Jesus. His perceptions were all clear, his emotions warm ; he realized, with vivid distinctness, the living manhood of Christ ; and all that warm affection which found such dear employment in embracing his earthly friends, clung with exhaustless enjoyment and perpetual freshness to the Divine Man, whom as a friend he had in heaven. Of Jesus he ever thought ; the outwelling of tender love towards Him shed over the strong framework of his character that beautiful and gentle light which rests on the soul of him who has even one bosom friend ; for, in the throwing wide open of the breast to the eyes of another, in reposing perfectly in his honour, wisdom, and love, in humbly yet joyously knowing that he is every way worthy of your total affection, there is implied such a power of breaking the chords that bind you to self, such a power to identify yourself with another, to look upon your whole character through his eyes, and to estimate yourself by his fully appreciated and dearly prized excellence, that a noble modesty, a mildness, a manly tenderness, must more and more speak its influence, in voice, mien, and action. This is the natural influence of pure human friendship. And in Jesus, Arnold found, in faultless perfection, all he sought in an earthly friend. His eye went right across the intervening ages to look into the eyes of the Saviour ; he saw there that wisdom which silenced the gainsayer, that calm before which the tempest became still, that love which beamed through tears upon the weeping sisters by the grave of Lazarus ; he seemed to grasp that hand which supported Peter among the waves, and whose touch lit the seared eyeball. Or his eye pierced beyond the atmosphere of earth altogether : he felt himself walking by the river of life, in the midst of the Paradise of God ; and here, too, he saw that same Jesus, with

those same human features and that same human smile ; and when, in the overflowing fulness of his heart, every expression of affection that might pass between earthly friends failed to express his emotion, he could, without scruple and with speechless joyfulness, bow down and worship Him. We noted that his heart had yearned after one in the image of God, and yet in the image of man, whom he could worship ; we found in that yearning the expression of a want common to humanity, and an argument against Unitarianism ; and now, when we see the yearning satisfied, may we not bid every Unitarian say, whether this influence, blessing and hallowing his whole life, is a delusion, and whether such warm and living emotions could flow from the sole and unrealizable conception of the infinite, the absolute, the one ?

But we must look at Arnold in one other and final aspect ; or rather, we must look at him where every other aspect is seen under a mellowing light, and all his joys blend in one perfect harmony. We have not yet looked into his home ; and, without any exaggeration, we may say, it was a sight for an angel's eye. It warms one's heart to think of Arnold's marriage and his domestic circle ; he was so precisely fitted for household joys. There is something comforting in the absolute demonstration, which his intense relish of life affords, that, bad as the world may be, and dismal as are the aspects of human society, there is yet a distinct possibility, beneath the stars, of enjoyment, serene from its very intensity, perfectly apart from the restless excitement of worldiness, or the melancholy delirium of passion. His home was a scene of unbroken, of almost ecstatic joy. You are continually reminded of its vicinity in perusing his biography ; stray gleams from its ever-burning hearth are perpetually wandering over his correspondence. With an earnestness that is the very voice of the heart, he exclaims, "My wife is well, thank God ;" and one is strangely impressed with the unconscious but true

sublimity of his words, when he speaks of the "almost awful happiness of his domestic life."

It has, in all ages, been a prerogative of Christianity to plant and foster domestic feelings and felicities. The religion of Jesus walks among men, and offers them two great boons; in one hand she holds the treasures of immortality, in the other the blessings of home. Philosophy has ever been high, remote, and unparticipating; in her glittering robes, she treads in majesty along the high places of the world, amid a light that scarce mingles with earth's atmosphere, but falls on the eternal snow, a cold, intellectual light, which has never yet brightened the cloud of unspeakable sadness resting on her brow. A high task is hers, and we shall pay her all honour; but let us dwell rather with Christianity in the valleys and in the clefts of the rock, where she spreads the nuptial couch, and lights the household fire.

It is time now briefly to notice one or two of Arnold's principal opinions.

Arnold of Rugby will ever be known as a foremost champion of the belief that Church and State are identical. He regarded Christianity as the true test of citizenship, and at once withdrew from all concern with the London University when he found that his proposal for including Scripture in the entrance examination was not to be acceded to. He earnestly opposed the very idea of a Christian priesthood as distinguished from a Christian laity; he considered discipline strictly and appropriately a civil penalty; the idea of government propounded by Warburton, that it is a mere protective and legislative force, he deemed utterly erroneous. Arguing that the end of a nation, as of an individual, must be the glory of God in its own greatest happiness, he asserted that the sovereign power, that from which there is no appeal, must, without a solecism and almost a contradiction, be a religious power; in a Christian country, of course a Christian power. Let there, he pro-

posed, be framed some general declaration of belief in Christianity, embracing the recognition of the Trinity, the inspiration of Scripture, and certain other leading doctrines; let a certain diversity be permitted in the forms of worship; let the Churches be occupied by ministers of various shades of belief and various preference of form, in the several parts of the Lord's day; let the king be recognised as the head of the Church on earth; and let all members of the Government, from premier to constable, be ministers of the Church-State.

Such was his scheme. It may well be regarded with wonder. It is true that he did not look upon it as at once realizable; it is a fact that he cared little for any imposing aspect which might result from uniformity, if reality were sacrificed to attain it; yet it is also unquestionable that no idea lay nearer his heart than the identity of Church and State; while no desire moved him more strongly than the instant and earnest promulgation of his views on these subjects.

Arnold's views on this point contained too much truth to render it a useless or superfluous task to combat their error. Several of the minor propositions on which he insisted are extremely popular in our day. Particularly does this hold true of his proposal to introduce the external morality of a respectable life, in place of any allusion, tacit or express, to particular points of intellectual belief, as a test of Church membership. Few general declarations are hailed with warmer enthusiasm than that which affirms the panacea for our ecclesiastical ills to be this: To remove entirely, or to attenuate until all obstructing definiteness is removed, the dogmatic creeds of our Churches; substituting some easy acknowledgment of the truth of Christianity, and a consideration of individual character. Not doctrine, but life; such is the cry of thousands. Combined with an earnest desire for unity and uniformity among the Churches, this idea leads men of deep piety, and accustomed to reflect on the present aspect of things, to

propose such modification of our creeds as would make Presbyterians and Episcopalians one, and, it might even be, draw an immense contribution from Rome. Combined with a desire to share the ease and respectability of national establishments, and a distaste for all religious controversy, it encourages men of unsettled or latitudinarian opinions to hope that their general, and, as it were, complimentary recognition of Christianity will procure them the name and honour of Christians. A few remarks may be hazarded on the subject.

First of all, attention is called to that principle, clearly discernible, and of unbounded range in our present economy, which may be generally designated, Division of labour : that principle which seeks the attainment of results by the balancing of forces, the harmony of antagonisms. The preference and pre-eminence which each individual accords to his own profession are certainly delusions ; yet is it manifest that these and similar delusions produce expedition and heartiness in the several departments of human work. Boldly extend the application of the principle : it is scarce possible to extend it too far. It will show the Almighty Governor of the world, in the inscrutable wisdom of His providence, educing in man's history the greatest good possible to a free but fallen will ; it will lead us to discern that many ideas of vital moment are kept alive by the jealous circumscriptive zeal of sects, and that a general ardour and activity are maintained by the really noble emulation of bodies making, though by different paths, for one goal ; whereas otherwise both might be covered up in the whited sepulchre of a vast and lifeless uniformity. We are fallen : we cannot, in speaking of man, take a step without acknowledging that. Truth does not here embrace the world like the great tidal wave, sweeping along in majestic calmness of power, and filling every creek and estuary ; truth rather descends fertilizing in many rills from the mountain side ; and it is better that it descend for

the present even so, than that it should flow in one broad river, leaving an arid desert over all the land, save on its immediate banks. Were Christian zeal increased in each of the Christian sects, the earth would revive and bring forth fair flowers and fruits ; but, by the draining of them all into one huge reservoir, no good would for the present be done.

It would be well, next, to consider earnestly the intense individuality of Christianity ; its habit of starting, in all its reforms, from the unit, and not from the mass. Arnold knew the importance of those words—"The kingdom of God is within you ;" but he did not perceive their full bearing upon certain of his opinions. By the conversion of individuals the world will be regenerated, and not otherwise. This does not make the Church, in its visible form and appointments, of slight importance ; but it points out its grand duty, that of converting men, and shows the vanity of looking for a substitute for personal godliness in any mechanism or apparatus. The difficulty here presented is stupendous ; but it is precisely the one which must be met. Easy were it to renew mankind, and change the face of the world, if it could be done in a public way, by the devising of some magnificent and politic scheme of government ; then might the cornerstone of the new world be brought out in haste, and, indeed, with shouting (for should not *we* have found it ?) ; but the kingdom of God cometh not with observation : it is the silent unseen work, in the quiet parish, in the quieter heart, that advances it ; there is no waving of banners, no triumph of human wisdom. And its final glories will come when the Sun of the latter morn is rising : the golden walls of the New Jerusalem will be cast in heaven.

But in fact the matter turns ultimately upon this question, What sort of unity or uniformity is desired ? A reality or a sham ? A unity which will give clearness and wisdom in counsel, and prompt decision in action, which will fan gently

the ranks of a sympathizing, consciously agreeing people, each individual strengthening his neighbour's hand ; or a flaring, meaningless banner, towards which every man looks with anxious suspicion, not knowing whither it leads,—a blazoned pretence, which makes each man unaware with whom he acts, and leaves him in the torment of loneliness, rendered three-fold more intolerable by the absence of that clearness of vision, and distinctness of aim, which redeem the evils of positive singularity of belief,—a perplexing and indefinable Delphic enigma, whose highest end is that ever contemptible one, to save appearances ?

Supposing any such scheme as Arnold's were carried into effect to-morrow, what were gained ? Would it be any additional *union*, that ministers who were wont to preach in different places of worship, officiated at different times, and to different congregations, in the same edifice ? Could it be expected that a month would pass over without discomfort and disruption ? Would any additional force be conferred upon individual effort by its being ranged under this tottering standard of patchwork unity ? What advantage might result in the assailing of adversaries is so slight, as to be almost impalpable to imagination ; while vast additional contempt would be hurled against any such Church, by a body of infidel assailants more closely united than ever. A Church acts through her members ; Christianize your members, and you invigorate your Church ; but that some unaccountable power would arise from furnishing members with a huge vapour-built abstraction, called a church, is incredible.

This whole idea contradicts and outrages certain of the deepest, noblest, and most ancient instincts of men. To erect the banner of truth, to leave no stain on the stars beaming there, and then to strive, in the face of scorn and hatred, to draw men around it and to carry it over the world ;—these are the perennially noble aims of men. To inscribe it with



an ambiguous legend, to blot and stain its stars, to exclaim that it is of slight consequence whether men believe in it, if they only follow it ;—these are no sublime objects at all.

It is proper to obviate difficulty by observing, that all Arnold's reasoning from the Epistles of St Paul, even if granted to be unassailable on its own ground, which is by no means to be done, can be met by this altogether preliminary consideration : That the Epistles of Paul, and the other Epistles of the New Testament, are addressed to those already in the Christian Church, and supposed, *ipso facto*, to have acceded to the scheme of Christian doctrine propounded by the Apostles. It is not to the internal exercise of Church discipline, but to the original admission into the Church, that appeal must be made. And in that transaction, how brief soever the formula might be, it had no reference to the life, but to the faith. It was the believing acceptance of Christ which entitled any one to baptism. And if the simple declaration of belief in Christ were now as little ambiguous as it was then, the briefness of the formula, as well as its essential characteristic, might be retained ; but when a general declaration comes simply to nothing, when it would admit all men, from Unitarians to Methodists, who chose to name the name of Christ, your only choice, if you retain the essential nature and value of the early declaration by which a man was admitted to the Church of Christ, is, to make it more explicit.

It is, after all, more in consistence with the general constitution of human affairs, that a body of men should unite themselves under a test of doctrine, than by a test of conduct. There is no fact more certain, or more generally recognised, than this, That the spiritual life of a man, his internal world of belief, opinion, feeling, determines his spoken or acted life. "False action," remarks Mr Carlyle, "is the fruit of false speculation ; let the spirit of society be free and strong, that is to say, let true principles inspire the mem-

bers of society, then neither can disorders accumulate in its practice," &c. If you wish to know a man thoroughly, you must know his belief: as he thinks in his heart, so is he. No great revolution in man's external life ever took place without originating in this internal region; all religions and philosophies address man as a reasoning, believing, not alone as an acting creature; and the fact holds eminently good in the case of Christianity, which came to the world offering salvation by *faith* in Christ, wrought by the Spirit of God in the inner man. It may be known, indeed, from life, whether profession is faithful; if one comes with "Lord, Lord," on his lips, you may know by his fruits,—you have no other means of knowing except by his fruits,—whether he really believes in the Lord or no. But if he declines even this preliminary confession, if he cannot say, in terms admitting of no ambiguity, that his faith is the Christian, you cannot argue from his conduct to his belief.

Those who believe that instant and universal harmony would arise from an appeal to a standard of life in our determination of the question of Church membership, may profit by a reminder that there are facts in ecclesiastical history to render their position more than doubtful. The history of Menno Simonis and his followers, in the period following the Reformation, deserves their consideration. Whatever lessons we may or may not draw from that history, we cannot fail to draw this: That to *settle* the standard of conduct will be as fruitful a source of disagreement as it has been to *uphold* that of belief. You will again have your lax and more lax, your old and new, your hot and cold, your good, bad, and indifferent (the latter tending to multiply); in one word, you will find that the formula for absolute concord among any great body of men is still in that undiscovered region where lie the philosopher's stone and the elixir vitæ. Unless, indeed, you are willing, for uniformity, to sacrifice

*everything* else ; there is one magician whose wand will give you uniformity enough, on his own conditions ; will you consent that your Church be touched by the mace of Death ? The fact is, that we must bear in mind what we may call the melancholy immortality, the resurgent Phoenix nature, of error. Looking on former ages, one can discern, perhaps, an excessive tendency to rely upon creeds ; this perished, but, in dying, gave birth to what is equally an error, the disposition altogether to underrate them. Surely it is unwise to cast from us the fruit of the intellectual toil of centuries ; if it is true that creeds cannot save us, is it not a still more absurd mistake to conceive that theological indefiniteness will prove a salve for all our ills ?

The source of Arnold's general misconception on these subjects, and of much of the error prevalent regarding them, seems to lurk in these words made use of by Arnold :—“Sectarianism, that worst and most mischievous idol by which Christ's Church has ever been plagued.” This is at the very root of the matter, and deserves especial consideration. It is absolutely certain that there is a deeper evil than Sectarianism in the Church of Christ ; there is in all ages that tendency of poor drowsy humanity to fall asleep and hide its eyes from the celestial radiance ; there is that stagnation, that indifference, that death, wrapping itself in various coverings,—of loyalty to man, of custom, of respectability,—against which all that is good in Sectarianism has been the rebellion and resistance. Who, with the Bible in his hand, and the history of the Church to read by its light, can fail to discern, what, indeed, has been seen by a searching eye which has yet, alas ! looked away from the Cross to other hopes, that it is precisely the heavenly nature of Christianity as an individual work, its perennial and essential superiority to any form of belief or mode of practice, to any standard in morals or attainment in life, which can be asserted of a class,

or transmitted by descent, which has necessitated the phenomenon, startling at first, but, when well examined, highly encouraging, that its every great revival has occasioned division and debate? Christianity has been a struggling light, a fermenting leaven, a purging flame; at its every revival men have striven, as it were, to crystallize it and still keep it hot, whereas it has indeed crystallized, but instantly began to cool. Were it not for Sectarianism, would not certain Churches have become absolutely dead,—decayed willow-trunks, hollow, dry as tinder, hoary yet not venerable? That divisiveness is in its nature bad, I would be the last to deny; that the strength of union is so great that the Christian ought to look well ere he foregoes it, is also true; but when our Lord Jesus spoke of his bringing division into the world, his eye glanced over the whole interval between that hour and the Millennium; and, though the unspeakable peace which He breathed over his disciples ere departing from them is ever to be sought after by the Church, and may at times blissfully envelope her as it wraps in its ethereal atmosphere the individual soul, yet she cannot hope for unbroken repose until touched by the rays of the latter morning. And this fact is of extreme importance, for instruction, for warning, for consolation. It is well that men be constantly reminded that Christianity is, once for all, essentially and eternally different from a power of respectability; that it has a perennial tendency to turn this world upside down; that it raises the soul into a region of other and loftier feelings and habitudes than can be attained by the embracing of any system or the following of any rules; that it is a walk of tribulation, gloomy with the frowns of kinsman and fellow-citizen. Christianity is a personal, real, and even awful agency, and no yearning for peace must be permitted to neutralize the effect of this consideration.

Though there is thus much to be questioned in Arnold's

views on churches and creeds, it must be again affirmed, and with emphasis, that they embodied a great amount of invaluable truth. The prominence he gave to the great fact that priesthood, in all relating to mediation, intercession, or peculiar hereditary privilege, found its completion and conclusion in Christ, is sufficient of itself to impart value to his system. There is, perhaps, no idea in the circle of theological truth more glorious or pregnant than this. That every member of Christ's mystical body, His Church, is a king and priest to God ; that converted men are now God's Levitical tribe on earth, witnessing for Him before the world, and bearing censers filled with fire from off the heavenly altar ; that no Christian, whatever his sphere, can absolve himself from the responsibility and duty of preaching Christ in his life and conversation ; that the clergy have no power distinct from the Church, and are simply that part of it set aside, as fitted in a more marked degree than the others, to preach and to rule ;—these and kindred ideas would, if they pervaded the minds of Christian nations, so completely dissipate at once all superstitious reverence towards the pastorate, and all class opposition to it,—would shed such a spirit of true unity, and harmonious, intelligent content through our Churches,—would animate to such fresh and far-extended zeal in the efforts of all to spread the gospel of our Lord,—that no earnestness, no iteration, can be excessive in their advocacy and demonstration. All the writings, too, of this truly Christian man, whether on this or on other subjects, proclaim to the world the sad fact that Christianity has yet but slightly leavened its affairs, and call for a thorough penetration by its spirit of every province of things.

Contemplating the whole phenomenon of Arnold's belief in this Church-State, I cannot but conclude that he fell here into that mistake of noble minds which represents the world as by no means in so ruined a condition as has been deemed,

and hopes for speedy amendment, by simple declaration of error, and proclamation of truth. Nature seems, as it were, to kindle this hope, in order that the young and ardent may go in full heart to the work, and not leave the world to absolute stagnation and death. Had Luther, when he felt the giant stirrings of the young life in his bosom, been permitted to catch a glimpse of those griefs and forebodings with which, in his latter days, he was apt to regard the state of the world, his hand had scarce been steady enough to hold that pen whose end shook the mitre in the Palace of the Seven Hills. The glory of exultant hope gleams over Milton's earlier page, yet he lived to mourn the evil days on which he had fallen, and to shadow forth his own stern sorrows in *Samson Agonistes*. All great and noble souls seem to have begun their work in hope, and ended it in sorrow ! Arnold could not even have given utterance to his scheme as a present measure without conceiving more favourably of men than their state warrants.

When death overtook him, he was, of course, as far from the attainment as ever. Towards the end he said :—" When I think of the Church, I could sit down and pine and die." He retained his opinions on the subject to the last, but was beginning to have misgivings. " I am myself so much inclined to the idea of a strong social bond, that I ought not to be suspected of any tendency to anarchy ; yet I am beginning to think that the idea may be overstrained, and that this attempt to merge the soul and will of the individual man in the general body is, when fully developed, contrary to the very essence of Christianity. After all, it is the individual soul that must be saved, and it is that which is addressed in the gospel." And again, shortly before his death :—" I feel so deeply the danger and evil of the false system, that, despairing of seeing the true Church restored, I am disposed to cling, not from choice, but necessity, to the Protestant tendency of

laying the whole stress on Christian religion, and adjourning the notion of Church *sine die*." This is in the right direction ; in conformity with the spirit of the Reformation, in conformity with the spirit of the New Testament. The Old Testament dealt with systems and nationalities ; the New Testament deals with individual conversion, with individual life : the old dispensation had its kingdom of Israel, seen among the nations as a cluster of beams falling from heaven on one spot, in a dark weltering sea ; the new dispensation has its kingdom of God, noiseless and unobserved, in the individual heart : the old dispensation had its temple on Moriah, crowning the mountain with gold, and adorned with the richest and rarest workmanship of the ancient world ; the new dispensation has the soul of man for its temple, viewless, and, to the unpurified, unennobled thought, unimposing, yet sublime and everlasting. It is an unseen, a spiritual sublimity, that Christianity aims at ; its ineffable holiness enrobes the soul in an immortality which can even now be recognised to hold more of heaven than of earth, and to have no element which will not flourish best in the serene air of eternity : confound it with systems and hierarchies, with the pomp and show of visible ceremonious uniformity, and you overlook its essence ; there will be no end of your wandering. Let Christians awaken to convert the world ; that done, all is done ; that missed, though the world tottered under the weight of cathedrals, and the pile of ghastly uniformity had a base as broad as Sahara, all were lost.

Arnold's view of the office and education of the theologian in our day deserves a passing glance. He recognised the value of the human element, as distinguished from the barely theological, in the training of ministers of the gospel, the fatal danger that students of theology become mere discriminators of doctrinal correctness, mere defenders of creed and system, mere catechetic expounders of the truth, mere denizens of

the school or library, failing to unfold within them that expansion of human sympathy which is the means in God's hand of the action of man on man. Soundness in doctrine is of vital importance ; yet theological education must wander from the spirit of Christianity if it becomes a mere instruction and practice in systematic or exegetic theology. It is well that a fisherman can keep his net in order, perceiving and rectifying the slightest rent or weakness ; yet the manner of casting the net is also of great moment ; and it is too common to find young men armed at all points in exegetic and controversial theology, who yet fail utterly when they come to cast the gospel net out into the world. Christ called his disciples to be fishers of men,—to the grand practical task of world-conversion ; when He sent out the seventy, His summary of doctrine was very short, while his detail of the method of their preaching was much more extended.

Arnold's political views need not long detain us. He loved politics extremely ; he considered the desire to rule a noble ambition. The leading features of his system can be easily defined ; they reflect well the main features of his mind, fiery realism, and statesmanlike constructiveness. He was one of the most determined opponents that Conservatism, in the various forms in which it has stereotyped itself, ever met. He deemed it always, in its essence, erroneous ; to halt was of necessity wrong ; it was only by progress, he would have said, that what is good could be preserved : proceed as slowly as is necessary for sureness ; but pause on your voyage, and that moment your ship begins to rot, or the revolutionary tempest awakens behind, and then the acceleration is fatal. His words on the subject are deliberate and bold :—"As I feel that, of the two besetting sins of human nature, selfish neglect and selfish agitation, the former is the more common, and has, in the long run, done far more harm than the latter, although the outbreaks of the latter, while they last, are of a far more



atrocious character ; so I have in a manner vowed to myself, and prayed that, with God's blessing, no excesses of popular wickedness, though I should be myself, as I expect, the victim of them, no temporary evils produced by revolution, shall ever make me forget the wickedness of Toryism,—of that spirit which crucified Christ himself, which has, throughout the long experience of all history, continually thwarted the cause of God and goodness, and has gone on abusing its opportunities, and heaping up wrath, by a long series of selfish neglect, against the day of wrath and judgment." Again :—"There is nothing so revolutionary, because there is nothing so unnatural and so convulsive to society, as the strain to keep things fixed, when all the world is by the very law of its creation in eternal progress ; and the cause of all the evils of the world may be traced to that natural, but most deadly, error of human indolence and corruption, that our business is to preserve, and not to improve." He challenges a wide induction :—"Search and look whether you can find that any constitution was destroyed from within, by faction or discontent, without its destruction having been, either just penally, or necessary because it could not any longer answer its proper purposes." At times he breaks forth in a fine strong figure :—"‘Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo,’ is the cry of Reform, when, long repulsed and scorned, she is on the point of changing her visage to that of Revolution." From these characteristic sentences, compared with other parts of his works, we learn accurately his position as a political thinker. Selfishness in its two forms he shunned on either hand : the selfishness that will sit in icy and relentless indifference on its throne, though that throne be placed on a pyramid of skulls ; this is the selfishness of those for whom it has, in all ages, been hard to enter into the kingdom of heaven : and the selfishness which cries simply, give, give ; let religion, honour, valour, all be flung aside ; let Throne, Church, Aristocracy,

cracy be cast into the fire, that we may be warmed at the blaze ; this is the selfishness of anarchy and atheism : between the two he trimmed, in the golden mean of a manly patriotism, a reasonable, unresisting, unhasting progress, and a stooping to the majesty of law. The Warburton theory of Government he rejected ; he recognised the duties and responsibilities of nations ; and thus his political system is traced back to its union with his Christianity in the responsible civil-religious Church-State. The laissez-faire school he opposed resolutely, looking with feelings of profound and melancholy interest upon the eighteenth century in its first half as a time of rest, which might have been improved, but was lost for ever.

In 1842, Arnold wrote thus in his diary :—"The day after to-morrow is my birth-day, if I am permitted to live to see it,—my forty-seventh birth-day since my birth. How large a portion of my life on earth is already passed ! And then,—what is to follow this life ? How visibly my outward work seems contracting and softening away into the gentler emotions of old age. In one sense, how nearly can I now say, '*Vixi.*' And I thank God that, as far as ambition is concerned, it is, I trust, fully mortified ; I have no desire other than to step back from my present place in the world, and not to rise to a higher. Still, there are works which, with God's permission, I would do before the night cometh ; especially that great work, if I might be permitted to take part in it. But, above all, let me mind my own personal work, to keep myself pure, and zealous, and believing,—labouring to do God's will, yet not anxious that it should be done by me rather than by others, if God disapproves of my doing it."

Christianity has wrought its work ; the armour is girded on, yet there is the willingness to unbrace it ; the noble warrior valour yearns to share the combat, but yet is embraced and transfigured in the nobler, that hides self altogether in desire for the glory of God. Next morning he hears the

voice of death ; the sun of that birth-day looked upon his corpse.

There is something martially stirring, and even beautiful, in the death of Arnold. It is like that of a warrior on the stricken field ; so suddenly does it come, and with such a calm pride does he meet it. That brief, decisive inquiry as to the nature of his ailment is strangely interesting ; he is racked with pain, and yet he is as pointed, cool, and explicit, as if he were examining a pupil. And the last look seen in his filming eye was that of unutterable kindness !

At the time when Arnold died, he could be ill spared to England. In the peaceful retirement towards which he had for some time looked, his eye might have taken a calmer and wider survey of those great questions with which his life had made him so thoroughly conversant, and on which the thought of a lifetime was well spent ; in the still and rich light of a restful evening, he might have seen what escaped his somewhat agitated gaze in the glare and bustle of day. Indications there were, as we have seen, of a change. It is not our part, however, to complain ; rather let us join in that noble expression of satisfied acquiescence in the plans of God, which so appropriately and sublimely closed his last writing.

SAMUEL BUDGETT.

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WHAT is that one point in which nature surpasses all novelists and depictees of character, and by their relative approach to which, all such are to be ranked, from Shakspeare downwards? It is the union of variety with consistency. To draw the man of one idea is easy. You have but to represent him, in all circumstances however distracting, with his thoughts running in one channel; on all occasions however irrelevant, introducing his favourite topic; and, unseduced by any evils incurred or benefits foregone, spending health and wealth in the indulgence of his propensity. Don Quixote, Mr Shandy, and Uncle Toby, are models in this sort. To draw the man who is a bundle of inconsistencies is also easy: to attain this, you have simply to pay no attention to what your character, as an individual, should either say or do, putting your own opinions on all subjects into his mouth, and always exacting from him the heroism to abandon his own individuality, to contradict himself in opinion and action, in order to advance your plot, or bring you out of a difficulty. Now, nature never produces a man whose whole existence is the pursuit or embodiment of one idea, although she comes very near it. For the most part, her way is to give men a large variety of qualities, opinions, powers. The man of absolute in-

consistency she never produces at all. Her inimitable skill is shown in the delicate graduation and adjustment of powers, so that they can live at peace in one bosom, and the man be a single personal identity. As she has struck a beautiful harmony in the senses, so that in their variety they result in unity; so does she unite variety with unity in the individual character; her men are not single lines, nor does she piece together contradictions; weakness and strength in action, unless each is fitful, warmth and coldness of heart, clearness and obscurity of intellect, generosity and niggardliness of disposition, never co-exist. This is a point of importance both in criticism and biography. Lord Macaulay and Sir James Stephen have noted nature's variety; but the whole truth of her variety in consistency may not have been so distinctly noted. Shylock, cited by Lord Macaulay, shows indeed many passions; but they are of a household; they have all a gloomy and obdurate scowl: hatred, revenge, avarice, fanaticism, darken his brow and eye; but they admit no alien gleam from love, forgiveness, or generosity: he is just such a character as nature would produce, and as he who held the mirror up to nature could paint. So it is in every other case instanced by Lord Macaulay, and so it must always be in nature. To expound fully, and apply the principle, might make a valuable chapter in criticism. But biography, and not criticism, is the present business. The dramatist or novelist and the biographer differ in this: the former have for their aim to attain, amid diversity, a natural harmony; the latter has nature's unity given, and his task is to show how its variations cohere and are consistent. When, after fair scrutiny, you find a character, in a novel or drama, acting inconsistently, decide that the author is so far incompetent; when you see a man in life acting in a manner which appears to you contradictory, conclude you do not understand him.

About the beginning of this century there was, at the vil-

lage school of Kimmersden, near Coleford, in Somersetshire, a boy about ten years of age. He had been born at Wrington, another Somersetshire village, in 1794, of poor shop-keeping people, who seem to have been hard put to it to find a livelihood ; for they went from village to village seeking a sure though humble maintenance ; and it was only after many a shift that they opened a little general shop in Coleford. The boy was in some respects distinguished from his fellows. One day he picked up a horse-shoe, went with it three miles, and got a penny for it. He managed to lay together one or two other pennies, and commenced trading among his school-fellows. Lozenges, marbles, and so forth, were his wares. He sold to advantage, and his capital increased. By calculation on the prices charged in the shops, by buying in large and selling in small quantities, by never losing an opportunity or wasting a penny, by watching for bargains and stiffly insisting on adherence to their terms, he laid shilling to shilling, and pound to pound, until, at the age of fifteen, he was master of thirty pounds sterling. The spectacle cannot be called pleasing. A boy, whose feelings should have shared in the exuberance and free generosity of youth, converted into a premature skinflint and save-all ; the frosty prudence of life's autumn crisping and killing the young leaflets and blossoms of life's spring ; a rivulet in the mountains already banked and set to turn a mill ;—surely the less we hear of such a boy the better : was he born with a multiplication table in his mouth ? This boy's name was Samuel Budgett.

A touch of romance is a salutary ingredient in character ; in boyhood and youth it is particularly charming ; but there is a possibility that it may go too far ; and a sentimental, tearful child, who is always giving some manifestation of the finer feelings, borders on the intolerable. There was at this same Kimmersden school (even in village schools variety of character will come out) a boy who seemed to be somewhat of

this sort. When a little money came into his possession, he bought Wesley's Hymns, and of a summer evening you might have seen him walking in the fields, reciting his favourite pieces with intense enjoyment. His mother was once dangerously ill, and his father sent him on horseback, in the night, for medical assistance. As he rode back, in the breaking morning, he heard a bird sing in a park by the wayside ; he listened in strange delight, and seemed to receive some tidings from the carol. On reaching home, he went to his sister, and gravely informed her that he knew their mother would recover, that God had answered his prayers on her account, and that this had become known to him as he heard a little bird sing in Mells Park that morning. Not one boy in a thousand would have marked that bird's song. On another day you might have observed him coming along a lane on horseback : as you looked, you saw that he was not thinking of his horse or his way ; his eyes had an abstracted look, though animated and filled with tears ; the bridle had fallen from his hand, and his horse was quietly eating grass. He was at the moment in reverie ; he was dreaming himself a missionary in far lands ; and the tears streamed down his cheeks as he knelt among tropical bushes, under a southern sun, to implore blessing on the household he had left at home. Such was the sentimental scholar of Kimmersden. And what was his name ? Samuel Budgett !

Nature had framed no contradiction. The boy's heart was tenderly affectionate, his nature keenly sensitive, his sympathies rich, kindly, poetic ; but his young eyes had seen nothing but struggle and penury in his father's house ; he had learned, by natural shrewdness and happy occasion, the lesson of thrift ; he had a brain as clear and inventive as his heart was warm ; by accident or otherwise, the pleasurable exercise of his faculties in that juvenile trading commenced, and with the relish of a born merchant he followed the game.

The money itself was little more to him than the pieces are to a born chess-player ; its accumulation merely testified that all worked well. The coalescence and relative position of the two sets of qualities were sometimes finely shown. He wasted no money, yet he lost no time in buying Wesley's Hymns. He amassed thirty pounds in a few years of boyish trading, but when the sum was complete, he gave it all to his parents.

Having finally decided to be a merchant, and adopting it as his ambition to raise his family to tolerably affluent circumstances, Budgett was apprenticed, at the age of fifteen, to an elder brother, who had a shop in Kingswood, a village four miles from Bristol. His education, now formally completed, had, in all relating to books, been meagre enough. He had learned to read, write, and to some extent cipher ; no more. In other respects it had been more thorough. He had already, in his boyish mercantile operations, served an apprenticeship to clearness of head, promptitude and firmness in action ; his father's house had been a school of rare excellence ; so rare, that, on the whole, flinging in Pocklington Academy, and St John's College, Oxford, and the Gallery of the House of Commons, into the opposite scale, it may still be pronounced superior to that of Wilberforce. In that house he saw honesty, industry, determination, and godliness ; he saw how severe the struggle for existence sometimes is ; he saw how faculties must be worked in order to their effective exercise. Of special importance was that portion of his education which consisted in the influence of his mother's godliness. He was still a child of nine, when he happened one day to saunter past her room. The door was shut, and he heard her voice. She was engaged in prayer, and the subject of her petitions was her family. He heard his own name. His heart was at once touched, and from that moment it turned towards heaven. Surely a beautiful family incident. The heart of



that mother was probably heavy at the moment, her eyes perhaps filled with tears ; yet God heard her, and on herself was bestowed the angelic office of answering her own prayer. Samuel Budgett went to apprenticeship from his father's house, a steady, kindly, radically able, and religious youth.

His apprenticeship was not such as to permit his habits of perseverant industry to be broken or to relax. He was at the counter by six in the morning ; "and nine, ten, or eleven at night," were the ordinary hours of closing. The toil he underwent was such that he used to speak of it till the close of his life. He was of small strength, and little for his years ; the exertion of the grocer's business was doubtless too much for him. He soon became a favourite with customers, his manner was so unaffectedly kind, his attention so close and uniform. It is interesting also to observe the keen thirst for knowledge which he displayed during those years. If he heard a sermon, he treasured it up like a string of pearls, and adjourned at its close to some sequestered place, to con it over, and lay it up in his inmost heart. What books came in his way he eagerly devoured ; for poetry he showed a keen relish, and committed large portions to memory. He exclaims, almost in anguish, "O wisdom ! O knowledge !—the very expressions convey ideas so delightful to my mind, that I am ready to leap out *and fly* ; for why should my ideas always be confined within the narrow compass of our shop walls ?" A shop-boy with so genuine and fixed an aspiration after knowledge will scarce fail to find education. The power to act nobly and effectively may exist with little book knowledge : to know living men, to have sat long under the stern but thorough teaching of experience, to have a sympathy open to the unnumbered influences of exhaustless and ever-healthful nature, may set a man above those who have studied all things at second-hand, as seen through other eyes, and represented by feeble human speech. Budgett had the faculty

to work well ; he was acquiring a thorough knowledge of men, and a power to measure them at a glance ; he loved the open fields and skies, the summer woods and the river bank, and every smile and frown on the face of what the ancients well called our Mother Earth. About the time when his apprenticeship closed, in August 1816, he wrote thus to a friend :—" As it respects my coming to Frome, I thank you for your kind invitation. I have intended going ; but I assure you, when it comes to the point I have no inclination to go anywhere ; for, if I cannot find happiness at home, it is in vain to seek it anywhere else. I think if I were to come with the determination to enjoy the company of my friends, by going to any places of recreation or amusement, though I am very fond of such kind of engagements, particularly where religion and real happiness is the subject of conversation, yet it may tend rather to divert my mind from God as the source of my happiness, than unite it to him. But for one thing I have long felt an earnest though secret desire ; which is, to spend a little time with you and Mr T—— alone, where no object but God could attract our attention ; that we may, by devout conversation, by humble, fervent, faithful prayer, get our souls united to each other, and to God our living Head, by the strongest ties of love and affection." The young man who writes thus from behind a grocer's counter has pretty well supplied the defects of his education ; in important respects he is educated. The idea of the last sentence is that of the noblest possible friendship : we can look for no fairer spectacle than that of those three friends kneeling before God, that the celestial bond of a common love for Him may knit their hearts.

After serving for three years with a salary, on the expiration of his seven years' apprenticeship, Budgett was taken into partnership by his brother.

He feels now that he has got a firm footing, that a spot

has been found in the world on which he may live and work. He prepares himself for the future accordingly. A pleasant little background of romance suddenly beams out upon us. We find that long ago—"very early"—he had fallen in love with a certain Miss Smith of Midsomer-Norton. His little touch of originality had been manifested here too; he had ventured to admit hope into his heart to this serious extent; he had dared to permit imagination to paint, in clear hues and with a flush of sunlight over its front, a snug pretty little cottage on his horizon, with one waiting at its threshold who to him seemed heavenly fair; during all his toil in that dismal prosaic shop from morning to night, he could see in the distance that angelic figure smiling him on. He had now reached that little cottage; from the faint though beautifully-tinted work of a dream, it had changed into solid brick,—a decided improvement: he married Miss Smith, and turned to face life with the heart of a man. He was now twenty-five years of age.

Let us for a moment contemplate the sphere in which Samuel Budgett commences work for himself. His sphere is not imposing; it is a retail shop in the grocery business, in the village of Kingswood, four miles from Bristol. His brother is a respectable, industrious, plodding man, who has prospered hitherto according to his ambition, and dreams not of any change. There seems but little room for advancement, little scope for talent; one can but buy and sell like one's neighbours, and live as heretofore; at all events, the field is open and level to all. Mercantile wealth and honour are, indeed, the possible prizes; but that a village shop should ever come into competition with any great establishment,—with those of Bristol, for instance,—appears never to have occurred to any one. Samuel Budgett's prospects are such as one may have in a village grocery.

The new partner is found to have ways of his own, which,

in this establishment, are regarded as new-fangled, or even officious. His brother casts a glance of indifference, or even dislike, upon his proposals and proceedings; only after a time, and as the commanding talent of Samuel becomes more plain, does he fairly throw the reins into his hands. Budgett acts in the way natural to him. It may be briefly characterized thus: he does, with perfect accuracy and thoroughness, what lies to hand,—what is ordinary and established in the routine of business,—and he has always, besides, a sure and piercing glance ahead and around. Here perhaps lies the precise point of difference between the accurate, methodic man, who will conserve all, but make no advancement, and the man who will step onward; both are thorough workers, but the one has no originality, no instinct of improvement, no healthful, intelligent audacity; while the other has. The blundering man, again, the man whose boldness and originality are not so fitly those of manhood as of youth, looks only, or principally, forwards; he devotes not sufficient time and energy to the ground already won; he will set off in foolish pursuit while a body of the enemy is yet unbroken on the field. The man who will make real progress never neglects the business of the moment, but he looks forward too; he ventures, on the right occasion, in the strength and self-reliance of talent, to break through sanctioned rules, and shape new ones for himself. The truly and healthfully original man is not he who recklessly gambles, appealing from custom to chance, but he who, with a light of his own, holding as little of chance as the prudence of the veriest plodder, appeals from custom to vision. Such a light had Samuel Budgett; in this sense, and to this extent, he was an original man.

It is not easy to exhibit this originality of Budgett's in action. When once a thing is done, as Columbus, and that wonderful Chinese genius who discovered that pigs could be

roasted without burning houses, knew, its performance, nay its invention, seem the simplest things in the world. If we trace Budgett's career step by step, we find nothing in the course of his ascent to wealth and influence which it does not seem certain that we should have done had we been in the circumstances. Yet it is almost certain we should have done otherwise ; and we have this simple way of satisfying ourselves as to the probability that we should, viz., by inquiring whether, *mutatis mutandis*, we are advancing in our own sphere. In every walk of life there are certain minutiae which are visible only to the man of insight, and to be seized only by the man of tact, but which are yet the tender, scarce perceptible, filaments leading to fortune's mines. If you know not how to see and seize these in your own department, depend upon it, gentle reader, had you been put down, instead of Samuel Budgett, in this shop at Kingswood, you would have sold groceries over the counter all the days of your life.

Mr Arthur sketches, with much animation and graphic power, the progress of Budgett, as he pushed on, step by step, and won position after position ; but we shall not here follow him. The reader must picture to himself a man of untiring activity who is yet never flurried, of keen and constant sagacity, of tact in dealing with men, of real and abounding affection to his fellows, so that the interest he manifests in their affairs has in it no element of deceit or affectation. He must mark him ever in the van of circumstance, discerning opportunity from afar, and seizing it with eagle swoop. He must see him gradually diffusing a spirit akin to his own on all who come within the sphere of his influence ; incapacity, indolence, and dishonesty, shrinking from his look. He must note specially the skill with which he combines conservation with advance. The customer who is secured is always first attended to ; all thought of extend-

ing the trade is to be postponed to his convenience ; the shops which deal with Budgett are seen to be the most prosperous, and no customer is ever lost. Looking at the perfect internal working of the business, one fails to find any suggestion of progress ; to mark how it is expanding, one is apt to think extension the sole endeavour. Budgett has always his foot on the firm ground ; but the light in his eye comes from yon bright gleam still in the distance.

A single illustration of his mode of work may convey some idea of its general character.

The business has now branched out in all directions. There are "several establishments" in Bristol ; the retail shop is the centre of great warehouses and counting-houses ; at Kingswood there are kept forty-seven draught horses. One night the citizens of Bristol are startled by the reddening of the whole horizon in the direction of Kingswood Hill ; the warehouses of the Messrs Budgett are in flames. The men of Bristol stand gazing as the huge blaze illumines the sky ; from all neighbouring quarters there is a flocking of spectators, and a racing of engines. Efforts are vain ; the horses, indeed, the stables, and the books, are preserved ; but warehouses, counting-houses, and the retail shop, are burned to the ground. Samuel Budgett has not, of course, forgotten to insure, yet the pecuniary loss is above three thousand pounds. Here surely is enough to confuse one ; without warning, and in a night, the fury of fire consumes your accumulated substance, and puts its volcanic interruption on your arrangements ; your workmen are flung out of their posts, your methods of work are broken up, your whole business-machine is torn limb from limb, and lies scattered in fragments. Now is the hour to prove whether you are a man of self-command and originality ; whether your mind is of that iron order which the sound of battle clears and animates ; whether, when custom, on which, as on a quiet horse, you have hither-

to ridden composedly along, suddenly pitches you from its neck and leaves you sprawling, you have courage and power to rise to your feet, and lay your hand on a new steed, and vault on his back, and break him in for yourself. Budgett sees into the whole matter, and comprehends how it is to be managed, precisely as if he had done nothing his life long but set things in train after sudden fires. The next morning every customer expecting goods on that day from the Budgetts receives a circular. It states briefly that there has been a fire on the premises, and that one day is necessary to repair the consequent disarrangement. Just one day: in such length of time, Samuel calculates, the wrath of the fire will have been baulked. And one day is sufficient. He goes swiftly, but with no hurry, into Bristol, hires a new house, sets all hands to work, and the next day sees all customers served. Bristol becomes henceforward the headquarters; and Samuel Budgett, now the sole head of the business, is more powerful than ever.

This is the true English working talent; the same quiet, speedy energy you see in Marlborough, in Monk, and, in grander combination, in Cromwell; in whatever form it is embodied, there is no standing it; men, nations, nature itself, give way before it.

It was but an unpromising sphere in which we saw him finally set to work; a village shop, with a line of donkeys at its door. There he took his post, to measure himself with his opponents,—to bring his force into the general system of social dynamics. Years have gone by, and the never-failing might of intellectual power has vindicated itself. The force of Budgett's mind has affected the whole region. His warehouses tower proudly, like those of merchant princes; over all the south-western counties of England his connection extends; over the sea, from distant lands, come vessels with cargoes for him. It is probable that a greater effect was not

possible in his department. He was not in the arena of the Rothschilds and Barings ; he never measured himself against the rulers of the Stock Exchange. But in the field where he did contend, he distanced all competition ; without capital, without prestige, in a village in the vicinity of a large town, he built up a business which cast every rival into the shade. And those warehouses have been built, this magnificent business has been established, with no fortuitous aid from happy conjunctures of circumstance, or timeous openings of the field ; it has been by seeing the hitherto invisible, by descrying every trace of occasion, by the constant, imperceptible application of a clear and tireless intellect, that his triumphs have been won. And now he is a man of wealth and importance ; he has satisfied his youthful ambition. The day was when he sold cheese by the pound across the counter ; he now receives goods “by the cargo,” and sells them “by the ton.” The day was when it was a serious question whether goods might be conveyed to Doynton and Pucklechurch,—a momentous and amazing undertaking to journey once a-month to Frome ; he has now a regular staff of efficient travellers, spreading the connection north, south, east, into the very heart of England. “I remember,” said an old man, who felt like a Caleb Balderstone on the subject—“I remember when there were five men and three horses ; and I have lived to see three hundred men and one hundred horses.”

It may be here in place, although what is advanced must be taken with the commentary of all that is yet to be related of Budgett, to look fairly in the face certain objections which have been urged against him on the score of sharp trading. He rose, it has been whispered, by elbowing aside his fellows, by grasping, with unbecoming haste and eagerness, what, in natural order, would have fallen to other men ; if just, he was not generous ; he gave no indulgence, and made no allowance ; he pressed every advantage, and used every oppor-



tunity ; he seemed always at a running pace, while sober men walked. As the testimony of Mr Arthur, given in his vigorous and admirable work *The Successful Merchant*, may be considered somewhat partial to Budgett, and as it is well to have a view which you wish to combat stated in its most plausible form, I quote a paragraph from Mr Arthur's pages. He has just intimated that the subject of his narrative was "quick to descry an advantage, and resolute to press it ;" he proceeds thus :—"This . . . formed the chief deduction from the benevolence of his character. In business he was keen—deliberately, consistently, methodically keen. He would buy as scarcely any other man could buy ; he would sell as scarcely any other man could sell. He was an athlete on the arena of trade, and rejoiced to bear off the prize. He was a soldier on the battle-field of bargains, and conquered he would not be. His power over the minds of others was immense, his insight into their character piercing, his address in managing his own case masterly, and, above all, his purpose so inflexible, that no regard to delicacy or to appearances would for a moment beguile him from his object. He would accomplish a first-rate transaction, be the difficulty what it might. That secured, his word was as gold, and generosity was welcome to make any demands on his gains. But in the act of dealing, he would be the aptest tradesman in the trade. To those who only met him in the market, this feature of his character gave an unfavourable impression. They frequently felt themselves pressed and conquered, and naturally felt sore. To those who knew all the excellence and liberality which lay beneath this hard mercantile exterior, it appeared the peculiarity and the defect of an uncommonly worthy man, yet still a defect and a peculiarity."

What is the general law on this point ? how does nature arrange in the matter ?

In all professions and trades, certain contending forces are brought into play. No man denies that the faculties of respective men, their sagacity, their energy, their perseverance, are different. Every profession is a form of human exertion, an arena for human power ; and it is all but implied in this, that in every profession there will be degrees of success and failure. From this last circumstance it will be an inevitable result, that certain persons find themselves surpassed, beaten, thwarted, and that they feel pain in consequence. It is one of the sad consequences of the fall, irremediable save by a reversal of that fall, but, like other such painful phenomena, itself of remedial tendency in the body politic, that every man who rises in any profession must tread a path more or less bedewed by the tears of those he passes on his ascent. The incompetent or indolent soldier takes commands from his able and active comrade who has left the ranks ; the able and indefatigable physician absorbs the practice of the dullard or the empiric ; the lawyer whose logic is as a Damascus sabre, and who wields it with an Arab arm, condemns his heavy-eyed or careless brother to starve. There may be no envy and no hate ; there may be no feeling of indignation, and no affixing of blame ; but there will be at least the pain of privation, of failure. More peculiarly does this apply to mercantile professions. Here the precise mode in which talent is brought to bear is in making money : if you are so much abler than your neighbour, you win so much the more money than he ; and, as your relative winnings are drawn from a common store, namely, the purse of the public, the more you have the less he gets. Depend upon it, he will in these circumstances feel "sore."

What, it may be inquired further, are the components of that force which a man brings rightfully into the arena of his profession ? Its components are twofold—capital and faculty. It is a man's right and duty to use these to the

utmost. In some professions, intellectual power constitutes the whole force ; but it is not so in commercial affairs. It is honourable, as will not be questioned, to lay out at fair interest the money or other capital which is yours. It is precisely as honourable to use to its last iota the faculty which nature has committed to your charge. If you see the gleam of a gold vein where I saw only clay, the reward is justly yours ; if you know the ground where corn will grow better than I, your sheaves must be more numerous than mine ; if you have stronger sinew and more perseverance, and choose to toil for hours in the westering sun after I have unyoked my team, you must lay a wider field under seed than I. And no upright or manly feeling in me will permit me to accuse you when you thus work your faculties to the utmost. The pearls are for him that can dive, the golden apples for him that can climb. I am no brave man if I bid you bate your energies out of pity or misnamed courtesy ; and if you listen to such request, you incur the responsibility of showing, at the last, a return on your talents not so great as He will know to have been possible who gave you them to occupy till His coming. Nature—and the word is used to designate reverently the method of His working who is nature's power—intends every faculty to be used to the utmost. A man who expects less from his competitors than an unsparing use of all their means, is a coward ; a man who aims at having more than the full use of his own, is a churl.

There are two positive and conclusive proofs that this is nature's intention, which will be presently adduced. But it may first be asked, whether this view of the case does not accord with the general feeling and sense of men. Is it not a bitter insult to a man who is on an equal footing with yourself, to temper your powers till they can act without in any way annoying him, to disguise your faculties that he may not feel his weakness ? Is it not recognised, that if one man sees

where he can make a bargain honourably and openly while another man is blind, and, instead of availing himself of the opportunity, apprises his neighbour of its whereabouts, he virtually gives the latter a dole ?

Leaving this, however, the two following considerations demonstrate the fact that nature means and commands men, without asking questions, and in every department of affairs, to use their talents to the utmost.

The first is, That this is nature's method of spurring on the indolent, and having her work rightly done. Every true man is a whip in nature's hand to scourge on the laggard : if he works rightly, he must be so. And if there is whipping, there must be feeling. What is it which keeps the human race in progress at all ? What is it which prevents our sitting down by the wayside and falling into a half-sleep, and, finding what will merely suffice for an animal existence, moving onward no more ? Is it not that, at intervals, in the several corps of the army, a strong and determined spirit starts up, who will strike forwards with new speed, and, despite the remonstrance of the slothful, animate the whole battalion to fresh life and energy ? Nature makes you pay for every hour of sleep or pleasure beyond the number she approves ; and he whom she appoints to receive for her the payment is the man who has worked while you have slept or trifled.

But, secondly, it is found that nature is here kind also ; that, however individuals may smart and grumble, this method subserves most effectually the interests of the majority. Her aim is thoroughness of work and amount of produce ; when these are attained the common weal is best consulted. And to reach this it is necessary that all the faculty of the community be at work, and to its utmost strain. One man cannot possibly restrain the honourable action of his powers for the sake of the feelings of another, without the loss of a certain amount of that force by which nature carries on her ope-

rations and provides for her children : kindness must blunt no sword or scythe, or it will cause ten to weep instead of one.

The idea of charity is alien to the idea of trade ; all that can be demanded under the name of mercantile honour is justice.

These remarks, and especially the second of the proofs that nature intends no respect to be shown to individual feeling in mercantile competition, will be illustrated by a glance at the general effect of the success of Samuel Budgett in the south-west of England. That effect was a general increase in the animation and vigour of his order of commercial operations over the district. The customers caught the spirit of those who had so ably secured their custom ; the firms still able to contend bestirred themselves ; there was new activity everywhere. In one word, nature's work was better done in those quarters than formerly. Mr Arthur appears to be unconscious of that very important aspect of the operations of the commercial class which is now referred to. He recognises the duty of each man to provide for himself ; he recognises the duty of every man to "adapt his services to the general good ;" but he does not perceive that, in the thorough performance of this last task, the man may find it impossible to avoid giving pain to certain of his own class. The confusion into which he falls arises from his failing adequately to distinguish the "general interest" of the public from the interest of competing merchants. He argues as if it ought to have been an element in Budgett's motives and calculations, to provide for the success of those engaged in operations similar to his own. He starts with a condemnation of Budgett for inflicting "soreness" on those with whom he dealt ; but he never says, and his whole book is an affirmation of the opposite, that Budgett did not work as effectually *for the public good* as was possible. It was his brother merchants alone who suffered ; it was in the market he was harsh ; it

was the extreme thoroughness of his performance of that task which Mr Arthur accurately defines as the merchant's in the social system,—the task of “directly conveying the creatures of God into the hands” of those for whom they are intended,—which made him at times obnoxious to those who performed the same task, from whatever cause, not quite so thoroughly.

In point of fact, it is here that the radical strength and stamina of Budgett's character become conspicuous. The circumstances urged in objection are conclusive proof that his mind was hale and of strong fibre,—that vital Christianity had introduced no softness or incapacity for working to the utmost of his powers into his nature. Mr Arthur informs us, his aim was unimpeachable honour and his word gold. We know, too, that money was not his object ; that wealth was a matter for which he cared little. The proof of this important point is perfect. He did not cling, with miserly tenacity, to business to the last ; he took matters quietly, and strove after no further extension when life was still strong in him. After he had ceased to attend with his old impelling vigour to the affairs of the firm, he heard some one say that he, the speaker, wished for more money. “Do you ?” exclaimed Budgett : “then I do not ; I have quite enough. But if I did wish for more, I should get it.” On his death-bed, when his voice was tremulous with the last weakness, he deliberately said, “Riches I have had as much as my heart could desire, but I never felt any pleasure in them for their own sake, only so far as they enabled me to give pleasure to others ;” and we know him to have been a man, out of the market, of a generosity which might be deemed extravagant. His brother merchants did unquestionably at times feel themselves disagreeably overborne, did experience an uneasy sensation, and call him keen and harsh. It is always unpleasant to pay tribute, and these men were commanded by nature to pay tribute to Budgett as their king. And

why did he, who had no particular desire for money, and an acute feeling of any pain he gave, thus permit himself, no doubt consciously, to pain his brother merchants? It was the strong instinct of the born merchant; it was the strong instinct of the true man. He could not dishonour his competitors by supposing them incapable of the stern joy of warriors in worthy foemen; he could not rein his steeds that stumbling or laggard hacks might reach the goal before him: he could not, without intense suffering, curb the faculties nature had given him, or turn them from their work. Those who experienced his power felt sore: certainly. Did the sectioners feel sore when they arrived at the camp of Sablons "some minutes" too late, and found that Napoleon had clutched the guns? But was it not right that the quick mind and ready hand should have them? In the market, Budgett knew instinctively that integrity ruled, that charity and favour were alien to the place; had he won counters instead of guineas, he would have acted just in the same way. One can imagine him even having had compunctious touches; but a sterner and healthier feeling would overrule pity, and hold it firmly in its place.

" I'd give the lands of Deloraine  
Brave Musgrave were alive again ;"

so said the chivalrous William, although he had just explained that, *were* Musgrave alive again, it would be necessary for him, by the rules of Border honour, at once to re-kill him.

This whole argument in defence of Budgett falls to the ground if it can be proved that, in his habitual dealing, there was the slightest infraction of equity, the slightest departure from the rules of the game. But, since we perceive that all the pain occasioned to his rivals in the market can be accounted for simply, rationally, and probably in another way, —since we are absolutely certain that he had no particular love of money,—and since we find his hand to the full as

ready to give as to gain,—may we not confidently declare his sharp, or rather his thorough dealing in business, to have been no deduction from his benevolence, but to have been a testimony of remarkable point and conclusiveness to the general force and ability of his character ? To any man that needed a helping hand he would have extended one ; but if you met him on the field, you were foot to foot and eye to eye opposed, and mercy could come only in the form of contempt. Saladin sent Cœur-de-Lion a horse that he might fight like a knight ; but did he blunt his sabre when he met him on the battle-plain ?\*

We have now seen, so to speak, the framework of our man ; we find that it is the unflawed iron of integrity, clear insight, and energy : he is a man who can work.

But we saw that, in his boyhood, there was not only a stern, but a gentle aspect of his character : we may find now that this iron framework of his manhood is wreathed with verdure and dewy flowers. We have seen him when he had simply to measure his strength : we must survey him now as a master ; as a member of society philanthropically desirous of removing its evils ; and as a father.

Entering Budgett's central establishment, where, as we

\* All this, so far as the general principle is concerned, still appears to me unassailable and important. But in its application to Budgett I confess that I now entertain some doubts whether it goes the *whole* length necessary to his vindication. Hundreds of men have made fortunes as large as his, and from similar beginnings. In their case, as well as in Bu 'gett's, the general causes of dislike here detailed would act ; but they have retained, even in the circles of their own profession, even as men of business, a character for open-handed frankness and genial acquiescence in the success of others. This character Budgett did not bear. I cannot perceive how he could have missed it, except through the action of some element in his trading habits which pertained to him *alone*, and which had been better away. To show in words what this was may be impossible. I cannot think that Mr Arthur has correctly pointed it out. It was something to be felt rather than seen ; and the opinion, universal so far as I have been able to judge, among men of business, that it did exist, must, I fear, be accepted as conclusive in the case.



have seen, hundreds of men are employed, we find that the whole works with faultless regularity. The genius of English industry seems to have chosen the place as a temple. There is no fuss, little noise : there is no haste—no time for that. The face of every workman shows that he may not linger ; its firm lines at the same time declare that he has no wish to do so. Hearty activity, healthful, contented diligence, are seen on every hand. The immense daily business is timeously transacted ; and the hours of evening see the place shut and silent.

Samuel Budgett is the mainspring of the whole vast machine. Under the middle size, with strong brows, open forehead, and lower features firm and clearly cut, he may at once be discerned to be a man who can dare and do : his “quick brown eye” pierces everywhere, and overlooks nothing ; its glance making the wheels go faster. He speaks a word of encouragement to the active, he sends an electric look to the indolent ; it is plain his authority is unquestionable, and that he retains and uses it without an effort. Bungling of no sort, be it from want of power or want of will, can live in his glance ; he can detect falsehood lurking in the depths of an eye, and veiling itself in the blindest smile ; he has a tact and ready invention which find a quiet road to every secret ; only perfect thoroughness of work and perfect honesty of heart can stand before him. Yet the kindly and approving is evidently his most natural and congenial look ; he speaks many a word of sympathy and kindness ; the respect and deference which wait on his steps are tempered by affection.

As a master he is, first of all, thorough. His men have a profound knowledge that he is not to be trifled with. The incompetent, the indolent, are discharged. A man must perform what he has taken in hand—or go. “Why, sir,” said one who had been long in his service, “I do believe as he would get, aye, just twice as much work out o’ a man in a

week as another master." This power of infusing a working spirit into men explains his entire success. Conceive every man he employed working thoroughly : everything else becomes then conceivable. He has the gift of knowing men ; for him who would prosper in any sort of practical endeavour, it is the indispensable gift. To this thoroughness and penetration it was of course again incident that pain was felt in certain quarters ; rotten branches, ineffective workmen, could not be cut away without crashing and crackling : here, too, we meet the fine confirmatory evidence of his real power and energy, that he awakened complaints on the part of those in whom these were lacking.

Next, he has a warm and honest sympathy with his men. It is not the result of their work, in the shape of his own profit, which gratifies him, so much as the satisfaction and advantage of all who work along with him. We find no niggardliness, no appearance of strain, in his efforts to attain wealth. If he gets more work out of men than other masters, his employed get more from him in the best forms than other men. At the time of his entering partnership, the working hours are from six in the morning to nine at night. This goes against the new partner's grain. "I do not like to see you here," he would say to the employed ; "I want to see you at home : we *must* get done sooner." Dismissal at half-past eight is attempted, and the men are greatly relieved. But this is only a commencement. If there are too few men, more can be added ; if there is trifling, men must go altogether. As the business enlarges, the time shortens ; and Samuel does not rest until he sees his men all trooping off cheerily to their families at five or half-past five in the evening. Keep these parallel achievements in view when you estimate the generosity and mercantile honour of Budgett. There is in the establishment a regular system of fines ; but the head or heads pay most, and the whole goes to a sick

fund. There is an annual festival given to the men ; good cheer, athletic games, and a certain amount, moderate, it may be hoped, of speech-making, speed the hours. The Rev. Mr Carvasso, hearing our merchant speak on one such occasion, thinks his address of "an extraordinary character," wishes it had been printed, and adds, "Except on that occasion, I never heard him come out in a set public address, but the talent then displayed convinced me of the grasp of his mind, and how greatly some had mistaken him." There is a systematic distribution of small rewards from week to week ; Budgett stands at a certain outlet to the premises with a pocketful of little packages containing money, and slips one into each man's hand as he passes out ; "one would find he had a present of five shillings, another of three, another of half a crown ;" the gift is graduated by relative merit. "Ah, Sir," exclaims an old informant, "he was a man as had no pleasure in muckin' up money ; why, Sir, he would often in that way give, aye, I believe, twenty pounds on a Friday night,—well, at any rate, fifteen pounds." Besides this, certain of the employed are made directly to feel their interest in the success of the business. "When a year wound up well, the pleasure was not all with the principals ; several of those whose diligence and talent had a share in gaining the result, found that they had also a share in the reward." "One," Mr Arthur goes on to say, "after describing the pains Mr Budgett had taken to make him master of his own branch of the business, and how, when satisfied with his fitness, he had devolved upon him important responsibilities, said, with a fine feeling which I should love to see masters generally kindle among those in their employment, 'And he never had a good year, but I was the better for it when stock-taking came.'"

But, last and most important of all, Budgett, in his capacity as master, is a religious man,—a real, earnest Chris-

tian. We have not now to ask whether his energy is unimpeded and unrelaxed, whether his powers have their full swing ; but it is important to learn of what sort his religion is, and to what extent it pervades his life, that we may know whether it is of a nature to be pronounced effete,—whether it is, on the one hand, a fashionable deistic assent to Christianity, or, on the other, a cramped fanaticism or bigotry, not blending in kindly union with the general modes of his existence. In his case Christianity was never intellectually doubted ; and he may therefore be taken as a good example of a thorough English merchant, who still, in the nineteenth century, drew the vital strength of his character from that Christian religion in which he had been born, and in which he had unconsciously grown up. His religion was of that personal, penetrating order, which has in all times characterized men who, even among Christians, have been recognised as such in a peculiar sense ; of that sort which made Bunyan weep in anguish, and at which the merely respectable person in all ages laughs ; of that sort against which Sydney Smith aimed his fine but melancholy raillery, in unaffected wonderment at its refusing to him the name of Christian minister. This determined merchant, whom we have seen pushing on to fortune through the press of vainly opposing rivals, humbles himself daily before God, searches his soul for secret sins, finds cause for keenest sorrow in the turning of God's countenance away from him. This Budgett can weep like a child, or like Bunyan, or an old Ironside, for his shortcomings. Christianity is to him as fresh as it was to Peter when Christ commanded him to feed His lambs ; its salvation is to him as clear a reality as it was to Stephen when he saw heaven opened. And it blends in the kindest union with his whole character and actions ; he feels that a Christian must be one all in all ; he lives as if in the continual sense of having been made by Christ one of God's priests upon earth. His natural tact,

and power of winding himself into close conversation, so as to get at men's inmost hearts, are brought into the service of the gospel. In an unostentatious, quiet way, he manages to urge its claims on his men, by casual words, in little snatches of conversation, at any moment when he has them alone. Every man in his establishment is perpetually reminded that he is considered by his master an immortal being, and feels that all temporary differences between them are merged in the sublime unities in which Christianity embraces all human relations. Once a man came begging employment of him : the wife of the applicant thus narrated the result :—"I shall never forget my husband's feelings when he came in after having seen Mr Budgett for the first time. He wept like a child ; indeed, we both wept, for it was so long since anybody had been kind to us. Mr Budgett had been speaking to him like a father ; but what affected him most was this,—when he had signed the agreement, Mr Budgett took him from the counting-house into a small parlour in his own house, and offered up a prayer for him and his family." The young men resident on the premises have separate rooms, for the express end that they may be able to seek God in private. There is daily prayer on the premises ; every day, in the morning, the whole concern is, as it were, brought directly under the eye of God, His authority over it recognised, and His blessing invoked. And every year at stock-taking, ere Samuel became sole head, it was observed that the two brothers, when it was ascertained what precise progress had been made, retired into a private room, and there joined together in prayer. It is a Christian mercantile establishment.

And what is the result on the whole ? There is the progress we have seen,—a progress which we can now to some extent understand. His neighbour tradesmen are heard to "speak as if he rose by magic," and to insinuate that "there is some deep mystery in his affairs : " we have some idea of

his enchantments. But the progress is not all. There is another circumstance, of which certain hints have already been let fall, but which is deserving of special attention. It is the fact that there is diffused through the whole body of the employed a loyal zeal for the success of the business,—that they are united by sympathy in a common aim,—that they feel as true mariners for the honour of their ship, as true soldiers for the fame of their regiment. His men, we hear, are “personally attached” to Budgett; they like to work with him and for him; they are proud of what has been done, and proud of having contributed to its achievement. This is a notable fact. With it, as the crown of the whole, we complete our survey of Budgett in the capacity of master.

The prospect which has been opened up to us suggests certain lessons, clearly legible, and of vital concernment, touching what may be called the practical philosophy of social life in this our age.

It being sufficiently evident that feudal tenures and powers have in our day ceased to exist, and the first general glance at our social arrangements seeming to reveal “cash-payment” to be “the sole nexus,” the universal connecting medium, between the classes of society which employ and those which are employed, Mr Carlyle and others have pronounced on the case in contempt, wrath, and lamentation. In a pamphlet recently published by Mr Carlyle, its objectionable aspect is finely represented by a high personage who complains to the writer. If conscience and common sense permit, it is well to condole with our distressed fellow-creatures. Let us therefore accord a hearing to his complaints. “Drops of compassion tremble on our eyelids,” &c. :—

“The Duke of Trumps,” says Mr Carlyle, “who sometimes does me the honour of a little conversation, owned that the state of his domestic service was by no means satisfactory to the human mind. ‘Five-and-forty of them,’ said his Grace,

‘really, I suppose, the cleverest in the market, for there is no limit to the wages : I often think how many quiet families, all down to the basis of society, I have disturbed, in attracting gradually, by higher and higher offers, that set of fellows to me ; and what the use of them is when here ! I feed them like aldermen, pay them as if they were sages and heroes. Samuel Johnson’s wages, at the very last and best, as I have heard you say, were L.300 or L.500 a-year ; and Jellysnob, my butler, who indeed is clever, gets, I believe, more than the highest of these sums. And,—shall I own it to you ?—in my young days, with one valet, I had more trouble saved me, more help afforded me to live, actually more of my will accomplished, than from these forty-five I now get, or ever shall. It is all a serious comedy,—what you call a melancholy sham. Most civil, obsequious, and indeed expert fellows these ; but bid one of them step out of his regulated sphere on your behalf ! An iron law presses on us all here,—on them and on me. In my own house, how much of my will can I have done,—dare I propose to have done ? Prudence, on my part, is prescribed by a jealous and ridiculous point-of-honour attitude on theirs. They lie here more like a troop of foreign soldiers that had invaded me, than a body of servants I had hired. At free quarters ; we have strict laws of war established between us ; they make their salutes, and do certain bits of specified work, with many becks and scrapings ; but as to *service*, properly so called, ——— ! I lead the life of a servant, Sir ; it is I that am a slave ; and often I think of packing the whole brotherhood of them out of doors one good day, and retiring to furnished lodgings ; but have never done it yet ? Such was the confession of his Grace.”

“For,” adds Mr Carlyle, “indeed, in the long run, it is not possible to buy *obedience* with money.”

Readers may be disposed to join in returning to the Duke

some such reply as this :—"Your complaint, we must confess, is indeed pitiful. Your domestics look upon you manifestly as a mere dispenser of good things ; they know you have money, and that by a little juggling they can get it out of your hands ; they laugh at you in their sleeves ; you are among them as the returning lord in Don Juan among the groupes that feasted at his expense ; in one word, they make a fool of you. Now this is never done, your Grace, unless nature gives material assistance. You perceive that the sailors in a seventy-four do not make a fool of their captain ; Budgett's men, we find, made no fool of him ; and do you think that the man to whom you confess would be made a fool of in that style, were he in your place ? *He* has made something very like an assertion that you are a 'reed shaken in the wind ;' he thinks, we used to understand, that your Grace's coat and badges were 'torn in a scuffle' somewhere about 1789 ; your resort for consolation was a little strange. What does your Grace want ? Would you have your fellow-creatures bow down to your coronet ? They say it is of faded tinsel. Would you have them reverence the face of which you are the 'tenth transmitter ? They say, 'O, look at it ; it is uncommonly foolish.' Would you like to have the gallows-tree on your lawn, and manacles in a dungeon under your hall ? Like enough ; but these are precisely what your Grace never shall get ; reach forth your hand to them, and see whether a red stream will not flow to wash your parchments very white ! Your Grace finds it too much to remember the duties for which you have hired your servants ; you have no tact or authority to rule men, no dignified self-respecting sympathy to win them. You fancy it is the form of your connection that prevents your being honoured ; it is no such thing : the dying Napoleon awed men by the power of his eye, when his tongue was already silent ; but men of your stamp were never truly obeyed since the



world began. Not even a gallows would help you ; it is a hopeless case. And we regard it as exactly as it should be ; like master, like man. Your affliction administers to us soft delectation ; we should deem it treacherous to our time to pity you. *We give you sixpence !*"

The case is simple enough ; the phenomenon need not startle us. The old obedience has indeed passed away ; and true it is that obedience has never been, and can never be, bought by money. What then ? There is a *new* obedience possible. Thanks to the French Revolution, thanks, whatever its evils, to advancing democracy, that it has struck, as by a universal electric shock, into the heart of humanity the idea, to be extinguished never again, but to work itself more and more into life and development, that no parchment written by human hand, no gold dug from earthly mine, can give a man title to obedience. That title must be written with other than human ink, bought with other than earthly gold. It must be written on the brow in lines of strength and thoughtfulness ; it must be seen on the lip, where earnest self-respect, and habitual self-command, and resolution that can die, have displaced vanity, sensuality, and pride ; it must glow, with a clear and ethereal fulness as of heaven's sanctioning light, from the unagitated eye, in the calmness of comprehending knowledge, the deliberate energy of justice, the disarming magic of love, the constraining majesty of godliness. As never before, all men are now flung on their individuality ; obedience is seen to be a thing beyond the reach of purchase, the possibility of transmission ; if you can rule men, they will obey you ; if you cannot, there is no help. Look into that establishment of Budgett's once more. What tie subsists between him and his men ? The only visible tie is of gold ; he pays them certain moneys, and they work for him in return ; their right to stay, his right to retain them, are precisely equal. Is he not, then, their master ? He can show

no patent of nobility unless he has one from "Almighty God ;" he was rocked in no ducal cradle, he wears no feudal coronet, beneath his mansion is no dungeon. Yet is he not a master ? Shall we say that the obedience which waits upon his steps is of degraded quality, or unworthy of the name, because it is expressed in the alacrity of the open and manly forehead, the willing sympathy, unshaded by fear and untainted by sycophancy, of the freeman's kindling eye ? Shall we say that the workman no longer renders to his natural and equal master a service and homage, as precious and as sincere as those of the serf who was predestined, ere his birth, to follow his chief whithersoever his bare will ordained, because the honeysuckles of his cottage wrap his own inviolable castle, and free-born children gambol round his knee ? That he toils is no disgrace ; it is appointed him by no injustice of man, but by the beneficent, though stern, decree of nature ; and his evening may be as glad and tranquil when the day's work is over, his sleep as sweet ere he goes forth to labour, his self-respect, his independence, his bold uncowering truthfulness, in one word, his whole inheritance both of duty and reward, as rich in the essential bounties of freedom as those of his master. Some men must ever ride in the car of civilization, while others drag it. The old reins by which men were guided have been wrenched from the hands of the drivers ; the drivers themselves have, in some places, been rolled in the dust, and trampled in their gore. But the fate of the French nobility need not be universal ; a strong and wise man can yet take the seat, and with new reins—the golden chords of love, the viewless chains of sympathy—still guide and control men. We see Budgett, a man born in poverty, do so with easy and natural effort. Why look back ? Why not rather charge ourselves than our time ? Why perpetually gaze with reverted visage on the coffined Past ? That lingering red is not the flush of health ; that tranquil and

smiling slumber is not the repose of gathering energy ; it is the stillness and rigid moulding of death that are on that face ; no resurrection ever woke a buried era. Feudalism in all its aspects—its airy and gallant chivalries, its simple devotions, its conventual dreamings—with its Du Guesclins, its good Douglasses, its kingly Abbot Samsons, its troop of fair ladies riding with golden stirrups to the crusade—has passed away to the very spirit and essence, and Democracy lays its iron roads across its grave. Many generations will gaze on the picture of the whole resuscitated life of the thirteenth century, as it has been painted, in a boldness of outline and incomparable richness of colour which must long defy the rounding finger and obscuring breath of time, by Mr Carlyle ; yet Abbot Samson had his hand-gyves in his dungeon, and no tongue dared to move in his presence. The man who will rule men in an era of freedom must dispense with these ; and though the hero of Past and Present was assuredly born a prince and ruler, men of his radical type are still extant, and even common, in England ; and why obstinately close our eyes to the same power as his, when exhibited, not in a mediæval monastery, but in a mercantile establishment of the working era ? Of old you might have obedience of serfs, but you had not freedom. In the modern time, when your masters are incompetent, you have a pretended though ignoble freedom on the part of servants, and no true obedience. Where you have competent masters and governed servants, both are free. Is it reasonable, then, and manly, to whine and whimper over our modern arrangements, as might a delicate-looking Puseyite curate, or to sneer at, and denounce, and turn away from them, as do very different men, instead of recognising it as one great task and duty of our age to reconcile master-ship with freedom, and valiantly setting about it ? That Mr Carlyle has written on these matters as he has done may well excite surprise. I may have utterly misconceived the

whole purport and philosophy of his History of the French Revolution ; but, if I have any decided idea as to the meaning of that book, or of what he says in his essay on Ebenezer Elliott, it is, that one great lesson he would enforce is, that the feudal nobility must either vanish, or show themselves possessed of *personal* powers to win the respect and affectionate obedience of men. Yet this duke is precisely one of those persons who could have no power except what lay in chains and badges. The world has seen strange things ; but it may be worth its while to turn aside and contemplate Mr Carlyle in the capacity of apologist for pithless personages still fondly called noblemen.

The true point of view from which to discern the essential type and distinguishing characteristics of Budgett is the mercantile : it is him in his true character you see, when you mark his intense delight as he moves among a group of active working men, animating them by his presence, directing their movements, and thrilling with sympathy for honest exertion. But we must briefly glance at the other phases which his character displays : we must see him fairly out of the commercial atmosphere. And what aspect does he present to us ? He comes out from the mine where he has been toiling so eagerly with the gold he has so manfully won. Has he the greedy, inhuman look of the miser, the small frost-bitten eye of the niggard ? He has worked hard, and the result we see in money : the "beaverish" talent he certainly possesses. Has his soul become beaverish too ? No. He has still the boy's heart which throbbed with joy when he flung his boyish earnings, the thirty pounds,—which probably appeared to him then a greater sum than any he afterwards possessed,—into his mother's lap. Over the deep mine, far up in the taintless azure, he has ever caught the gleam of treasure which might well purge his eyes in the glare of earthly gold. To make money has been his duty ; he could not work to the measure

of his abilities without that result ; but to give is his delight and his reward. With the same tact which stood him in such good stead among his workmen and customers, he strikes out devices of good ; with his native energy he carries them out. His positive expenditure in philanthropic objects is fully L.2000 a-year. His mansion becomes a centre of beneficent light for the whole district,—in every direction the broken mists of ignorance and vice retiring. His heart is as warm, his hand as open, as if he had never known what it was to make a shilling ; he shows himself worthy to be a steward of nature, with large gifts committed for disposal to his hand ; he scatters bounty where his agency is unseen ; he ever makes charity the handmaid of industry, never of recklessness or sloth ; the blessed influence of generosity, tempered by justice, and governed by strong intelligence, is felt over the district.

And now we shall look for a few moments into the sanctuary of his home. We saw him take his early love to be his wife, in a little cottage in an English lane. As his other projects have prospered in his hands, his cottage has gradually changed its appearance ; he is now in a commodious mansion, seated in the midst of broad pleasure-grounds, and commanding a wide prospect of that region which his presence has lighted with new comfort and gladness. In his family circle we find him displaying the same traces of original character which we have marked in his procedure elsewhere. His children are admitted to an unwonted intimacy and confidence. “They knew his business affairs intimately, and in every perplexing case he would gather them round him, with their mother and aunt, and take their advice. His standing council was formed of the whole family, even at an age when other fathers would think it cruel and absurd to perplex a child with weighty concerns.” He seems to have attained that perfection of domestic rule where kindness is so govern-

ed by sagacity that severity is banished, yet every good effect of severity won. The sympathy which he meets among his workmen, and which lends an aspect of noble work and noble governance to his whole business establishment, pervades, with a still finer and more tender warmth, the chambers of his home ; his children go hand-in-hand with him in his plans of improvement, the willing instruments in every philanthropic device. And he feels that he has their sympathy in higher things than these ; we hear him expressing the conviction that they are all going along with him on the way to heaven. This is the final touch of joy that can gild a Christian home, a ray of heaven's own glory coming to blend with, to hallow, to crown, the blessings of earth. Be it a delusion or not, one would surely wish to "keep so sweet a thing alive : " if it is a fond enthusiastic dream, so perfect is the smile of happiness on the dreaming face, that it were surely kind to let the sleeper slumber on. He believes that all his family will again gather round him on the plains of heaven : that the flowers which now shed fragrance through his life will continue to bloom beside immortal amaranths ; that the voices which are now the music of his being will mingle with the melodies of his eternal home ; that the light of those smiles which greet his approach to his threshold, and which now make summer in his heart, will blend with the light that fadeth never. Let us not say that his hopes are vain : his children are his friends, and friendship lives in the spirit-land.

Thus soft, genial, tenderly kind, do we find the hard-trading Budgett, when we contemplate him where kindness and tenderness are in place. Depend upon it, were he not a right merchant in the market, he would not be so gentle in the home : it is only the strong who can thus wrap the paternal rod in flowers. To see him in the market, one would say there was not a dew-drop of poetry to soften the ruggedness

of his nature. Follow him in a walk on his own grounds, and you are apt to think him a soft sort of man, with somewhat of a sentimental turn. For he has still the same open sense for nature's beauty and music that he had when he heard that little bird's morning carol, and felt in his young heart that God had answered his prayer for his mother. There is a certain dewiness, a flowery freshness, over his character, an air of unexhausted, unstrained strength. Three things, at least, nature has united in him, which have been deemed incompatible : thorough working faculty, religion of the sort which weeps for sins invisible to the world, and poetical sympathy. You may see him distancing his competitors in the market, until they whisper that he must work by magic ; you may see his cheek wet with tears as he prays to his God ; you may hear him, in gleeful tone, quoting verse after verse of poetry in his fields, while his children romp around. From his early days, too, the strange merchant has preached, and with extraordinary power ; his connection with the Wesleyan body leading him to this. His whole character, last of all, is veiled in humility ; his bearing is that of a truly modest, self-knowing man, who can act with perfect self-reliance, yet take advice, if such may come, from a child.

At the age of fifty-four, when it might have been hoped that many years of life were yet before him, Budgett gave symptoms of a fatal malady. Dropsy and heart-complaint showed themselves, and his strength gradually wore away. His death-bed was glorious even among Christian death-beds. And though no weighty argument can be based upon the closing scenes of Christian men, death-bed experience is not of slight importance. Life is assuredly more important than death ; on it ought the main attention to be fixed. Yet it is mere vacant absurdity to deny that fear casts its shade over mankind here below, as they look forward beyond time ; that it is really the king of terrors whose realm is the grave, and

that it has been one grand aim of all religions to discrown the spectre. If, moreover, man is only for a span a denizen of time,—if he is yet to be born into eternity, and his life here is of importance only in its relation to his life beyond,—that must ever be a moment of supreme interest to men, when the immortal soul is preening her wings for an infinite ascent, when earth is becoming still, and voices out of the distance seem to reach the dying ear, and a strange radiance falls across the bourne into the glazing eye. Budgett found his simple Christian faith, laying hold of the sword of the Spirit, strong enough to palsy the arm of the terror-crowned, and strike from it its appalling dart; nay, he found that simple Christian faith of power sufficient to steady his eye in gaze upon the spectre, until his terrors faded away, and he became an angel standing at the gates of light. At first he was troubled and cast down; but ere long the victory was complete. I shall quote a few of his words, leaving readers to make upon them their own comments; to judge for themselves whether they express a selfish joy, or that of one whose delight was in holiness and in God; and to observe the child-like humility that breathes beneath their rapture. His death occurred in the April of 1851, and these words were uttered by him from the time that his illness began to manifest its fatal power; they sufficiently indicate the occasions of their utterance:—

“I sent for you to tell you how happy I am; not a wave, not a ripple, not a fear, not a shadow of doubt. I didn’t think it was possible for man to enjoy so much of God upon earth. I’m filled with God.”

“I like to hear of the beauties of heaven, but I do not dwell upon them; no, what I rejoice in is, that Christ will be there. Where He is, there shall I be also. I know that He is in me, and I in Him. I shall see Him as He is. I delight in knowing that.”



"How our Heavenly Father paves our way down to the tomb ! I seem so happy and comfortable ; it seems as if it cannot be for me, as if it must be for somebody else. I don't deserve it."

"I have sunk into the arms of Omnipotent Love."

"I never asked for joy ; I always thought myself unworthy of it ; but He has given me more than I asked."

"I am going the way of all flesh ; but, bless God, I'm ready. I trust in the merits of my Redeemer. I care not when, or where, or how ; glory be to God !"

JOHN FOSTER.

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JOHN FOSTER, peasant in the west of Yorkshire, and father of the John Foster with whom we are concerned, was one of those undoubting Christians whose lives, unnoticed by the world, and unconsciously to themselves, are yet faithful transcripts from apostolic or patriarchal times. He no more questioned the stability of that path on which he went towards eternity, than he questioned the firmness of the ground along which, with solid measured tread, he walked to his daily toil. For twenty years before his death, he prayed every year that God, if it seemed good to Him, would terminate his earthly career. And this strength of character was finely shaded by a tendency towards reflection, a love of meditation and retirement. There was a lonely spot on the banks of the river Hebden whither he used to retire in meditative hours, and which became known as Foster's Cave. His wife Ann was the fitting spouse of such a husband. Her piety was of the same order as his; her decision still more conspicuous. One day, before their marriage, Mr Foster happened in her presence to be in a desponding mood. "I cannot," he said, "keep a wife."—"Then I will work and keep my husband," rejoined Ann.

On the 17th of September 1770, their son John was born.

It soon became evident that the child inherited more or less the disposition of either parent. He was a quiet, retiring boy, who loved to separate himself from the boisterous circle of youthful mirth, and to commune with his heart alone; his sympathies were not diffusive, his likings were few; we hear but of one friend of his own age; he lacked the glad buoyancy of early youth, and soon learned to wander musing by the brook side or in the lonely wood. In this we recognise the son of that John Foster who used to meditate and to pray in the cave beside the murmuring Hebdon. He was, however, nowise destitute of acute feelings or strong energies: here he took after his other parent. When he did love or hate, he did either well.

But it soon became manifest that he possessed elements of character distinctively his own. He was not merely shy and silent, heedless of boyish sports; he was not only an observant, sagacious, precociously wise, and, as neighbours said, "old-fashioned" little man: he was conscious, besides, of feelings with which no sympathy was to be expected from any one,—of pensive yearnings, and half-defined longings, which shut him, by the barrier of a strong individuality, from the throng. His sensibilities were tender to a degree rare in boyhood; he "abhorred spiders for killing flies, and abominated butchers;" his imagination tyrannized over him, painting to his eye the scene of torture, or the skeleton, or the apparition, until he shrank in loathing and terror from their ghastly distinctness. This delicate sensibility, manifesting itself in a fellow-feeling with every being that did or could suffer pain, and this eye-to-eye clearness of imaginative vision, were determining elements in his developed character.

He was about fourteen years of age when he ventured so far to unbosom himself to his friend Henry Horsfall as to let him know that the peace of his heart had been disturbed, and that it was only by taking to himself as a garment the

robe of Christ's righteousness that he could regain calmness of mind. This was the turning-point of his life, the occasion of his first and irrevocably determining to enlist in the army of light. A long period elapsed ere his whole system of belief evolved itself, and many a change passed over his spirit before he finally reached a station in which he could calmly feel and act, unshackled by fear and unshaken by doubt; but he had taken the step of separation, he had lifted his eye from earth to heaven; and whatever change—of circumstance, of opinion, of feeling—may afterwards have taken place—however he may have doubted, whithersoever he may have wandered—this attitude was never altered.

When he attained his seventeenth year he became a member of the Baptist congregation at Hebden Bridge; and about the same time resolved to dedicate himself to the Christian ministry. For three years he devoted himself to theological and general study in Brearly Hall, an educational institute in the neighbourhood. While here, he continued, as in his early boyhood, to lend his parents occasional assistance in their labours at the loom.

He now applied himself to the acquisition of knowledge with intense earnestness. For whole nights he read and meditated, choosing as his retreat on such occasions a grove in Dr Fawcett's garden. His mind was tardy in its operations. He performed his scholastic exercises with extreme slowness. But his efforts were unremitting and determined; and no doubt it was here he acquired much of that extensive, though somewhat miscellaneous information, of which his works give ample evidence. Here, too, he was enabled to indulge his love of the various aspects of nature. It was his recreation to ramble in the neighbouring glens and woodlands. On one occasion he wandered for a whole night with a friend under the open sky, that he might note the varying features of twilight, of darkness, and especially of dawn. He

displayed at an early period, what he continued to evince through life, a deep and genuine love of nature. In early days it led him to wander in solitary ways, while other boys were at sport; and in after years it caused him to speak of those unacquainted with the sympathetic emotions of a deep affection for nature, as seeming to want a sense. He loved every aspect of sky and earth; but the naturally serious cast of his mind was evinced by his preference of the great and gloomy. The glories of the moon streaming over the forest, and showing the dim crag, with its giant shadow in the slumbering lake,—the slow march of the laden clouds across the sky,—the cleft cloud, whose jagged edges were fringed with white fire, and from whose caverns issued the laugh of the thunder,—these fitted best his sombre yet vivid imagination, and yielded him the pleasure of a stern enchantment. But he had also a look of sympathy and love for more delicate and minute beauties. He would watch lovingly the kindling smile of nature as Spring awoke and opened the gates to Summer: he heard with a thrill of joy the note of the bird, and speaks often of the sky-people, the inhabitants of the summer sunbeams, that were such favourites with Jean Paul. Yet Foster's love of nature was perhaps never the passionate love of the poet; and the flow and freshness of its early manifestations were soon impaired by a habit of schooled and conscious observation. He exercised a careful supervision over his thoughts and impressions, striving to subject all the operations of his intellect to a "military discipline." He learned to observe nature with a certain constrained accuracy, to jot down his various impressions of her beauty, to gather analogies, similes, and so on; by which method, it is to be feared, coy nature will not be known. Foster was in all things too self-conscious. He would have the flower up to see how its roots were thriving. He would lay out his mind like a Dutch garden, all trimmed, and squared, and

ordered. This is an important element in his character. It impeded that easy natural flow of thought and diction, it dulled that sportive buoyancy of soul, which indicate, as they spring from, an energy working much by spontaneity and impulse, a knowledge that has been naturally matured, and is ever fresh and verdant. We meet in his works with glimpses of insight into the vast region of our unconscious influences ; but he seems to have considered it his duty to order every movement of his own mind with an algebraic exactness ; he never fairly embraced and submitted to the beautiful and important truth, that the noblest education is that of sympathy, when, with viewless hand, she throws open the gates of the soul in order that the forms of beauty and the light of truth may silently enter in.

The acuteness of Foster's sensibilities has been already alluded to : another word must be devoted to the subject ere passing on. In no way is he more frequently or dogmatically characterized than by the word "misanthrope." This word is an absolute misapplication. It can be proved that, from his earliest to his latest years, his heart was tenderly, delicately kind. His sensibilities were not less, but more acute, than those of his fellow-men.

At first glance he appeared cold. It was natural that he should : the circumstances of his boyhood, and perhaps a constitutional tendency, determined it so. He had no very early associates ; his parents were far advanced in life, and did nothing to encourage the healthful sprightliness of childhood ; his brother Thomas was too much younger than himself to be his playmate ; he had no sister. The consequence was, that he grew up externally cold and self-involved. On his sedate and pensive countenance there was not that look of vivacious geniality, that flower-like smiling, which is nature's appointed expression and emblem of kindness of heart. He possessed no advantages of face and form, nor had he

that nameless power to attract and please which makes some persons universal favourites.

Yet all this was in his case consistent with the fact that he was naturally one of the most truly loveable of human beings ; noble, gentle, tenderly affectionate. His nature, in its depths, had a far truer and deeper tenderness than that of thousands of genial, ever-smiling, companionable boys and girls. The proof of this is twofold : first, direct manifestations, on his part, of delicate sensibility ; and, next, that the supposition of an underlying tenderness of nature is necessary to explain, and sufficient for the explanation of, several remarkably prominent leanings and opinions of Foster.

Among the direct manifestations of genuine and tender kindness, we may place first his acute feeling of the sufferings borne by the lower animals. This is an infallible pledge of kindness of heart. In Foster's case it was a deep, constant, and considerate feeling. Very interesting also, in this point of view, is that sense of a void in his heart, to be filled only by a loved and loving object, which breathes in his early letters. He yearned with intense desire for some fully sympathizing heart. "Cold as you pronounce me," he exclaims in an early letter, "I should prefer the deep animated affection of one person whom I could entirely love, to all the tribute fame could levy within the amplest circuit of her flight." Again,—“Something seems to say, Come, come away ; I am but a gloomy ghost among the living and the happy. There is no need of me ; I shall never be loved as I wish to be loved, and as I could love. . . . I can never become deeply important to any one ; and the unsuccessful effort to become so costs too much, in the painful sentiments which the affections feel when they return mortified from the fervent attempt to give themselves to some heart which would welcome them with a pathetic warmth.” These are the accents of a really tender, as well as noble nature ; of one which

found no joy in isolation, although met by disappointment in the throng. Foster was not recognised by men in general to be kind ; but none ever came into close converse with him who did not know it well : there were deep and pure fountains of tenderness in his heart, but far secluded from the general gaze. There are wells among the calcined ridges of the Abyssinian deserts known only to the wild gazelle, and for which even the wandering Arab seeks in vain for ages. Many a man there is who is deemed hard and ungenial, merely because his kindness is hidden deep and cannot be approached by ordinary paths. Further and conclusive proofs of Foster's deep kindliness of nature will unfold themselves as we proceed.

At the age of twenty-one he left Brearley and entered the Baptist College in Bristol. His application here must have been fitful. "Probably," he says, writing to a friend in Yorkshire, "there never was a more indolent student at this or any other academy. I know but very little more of learning, or anything else, than when I left you. I have been a trifler all my life to this hour." But his mind was advancing. His letters testify to strong moral earnestness, to a stern and manly ambition, and to a ripening soundness of judgment. His eye was ever upwards.

He left the Bristol seminary ere he completed his twenty-second year. His education, which, so far as school and college were concerned, was now completed, must be pronounced defective. A general idea of the classics he had, but nothing more ; his memory seems not to have been trained by any systematic discipline, and, though by no means singularly bad, was yet a cause of complaint to him through life ; his reasoning powers do not appear to have been matured by any course of scientific or metaphysical study, and all his works bear witness to the fact. By miscellaneous reading, however, he had gained a large, though heterogeneous, stock



of knowledge ; his intellect, while certainly giving no clear promise that it would ever be of that embracing kind which casts its generalizing glance over vast tracts of history, or science, or philosophy, had yet proved itself possessed of great natural vigour and shrewdness ; beneath all,—the substratum of his whole mind,—lay a radical honesty, a penetrating sense of reality. This last armed him with an almost irresistible power to pierce disguises and burn up moral and social cobweb and filigree.

Such, in meagre outline, were the boyhood and youth of Foster. We have seen him under the influences of the home and the school. We now arrive at that portion of his history which is in every case critical. We have to observe him as he emerges from the quiet region, and the still though powerful influences which have hitherto moulded his character, and enters a wider and more perilous sphere. The kindly words and glances of a godly father and mother, the friendly admonitions of Christian instructors, must give place to the rude teaching of experience. Till now he has been gently and genially swayed by influences exterior to himself ; he has gone on in peace and trustfulness, unconsciously leaning on the thought and knowledge of others ; not to any measure of excess, but rightly and blissfully, he has hitherto imbibed the impressions of his circle, and been what it is seemly for a boy and a youth to be who has been planted by God in a Christian family and a Christian land. But now his instructors are to be the many voices of contemporaneous life : his keen and susceptible mind is to be brought into contact with the agencies that ever work in the great world, shaping out the future ; he is to know what men in their various grades and nations are doing and saying, that he may manfully determine how it is his duty to speak and to act. He is to make his opinions his own, by taking them down for a time from those niches in his mind where the hand of parent

or instructor had placed them, subjecting them to a careful and earnest scrutiny, and either replacing them or casting them away, by the free yet resolute hand of individual will. He is to know the agony of doubt. He is to be flung from youth's pinnacles of hope, till he almost discerns in the distance the dim Lethe of despair. He is, so to speak, to serve his apprenticeship to the time, to be made acquainted with its wants, its sicknesses, its conditions, its weapons, that at length he may step forth a skilful and well-approved workman, knowing what it is foolish or boyish to attempt, what it is imbecile or cowardly to shun.

For the accomplishment of this high object a period of ten years will not be too long. We shall take a broad glance along it, specifying a few of its more prominent influences, and endeavouring, in his own words, to trace his progress through it.

It will be necessary for us in the outset to ask, what were the great public influences of the time : the question can be briefly answered.

We have already had occasion to refer to the French Revolution. It is unnecessary to do more now than to note the extent of its influence. Every vein and artery of the social system, and that in all lands, felt that tremendous throb at the heart of the world. Thrones, senates, churches, felt it ; nay, to pursue the metaphor, every smallest capillary to which blood could circulate was affected, every unobserved assemblage where eye caught light from answering glance, every college coterie, every family circle. There was not a noble young heart in Britain but beat more quickly at the great tidings ; and almost universally it was the beating of exultant sympathy. The revolutionary fire went burning and blasting, and the eyes of the young kindled into joy and hope. "It is," such was the universal shout, "the breaking of the dawn ; the mists are retiring before it ; nothing but

mist is dissipated ; presently the wide landscape, in a glory and beauty as of calm and bounteous summer, will spread away to our dazzled eyes towards the horizon of the future." They did not reflect that the path of fire is over a soil left blackened and sterile, where only the charred skeletons of the once proud forest remain, and that long years revolve ere nature kindly mantles it in green. Those were the days when Coleridge and Southey were building, of cloud and moon-beam, their notable fabric of pantisocracy,—the government of all by all ; where *every* man, as Louis Blanc promised, would keep his carriage. James Montgomery, in those days, found himself a dangerous person, and was immured in a prison. Wordsworth looked dark and dangerous. It was a strange and tumultuous time. The great era of doubting had finally come. All things were subjected to a trial as of fire, and antiquity seemed only to make them burn better.

Foster was deeply affected by the great changes taking place. Both politically and religiously, his opinions became unsettled,—one might almost say, wild ; while the turmoil and confusion in his mind were greatly aggravated by individual characteristics. For far different questions presented themselves to his mind than troubled other democrats. He pondered deeply on the human tale, and the unfathomable dealings of God with man. That insatiable yearning, which has marked the noblest minds, to penetrate the gloom that surrounds the destiny of man, to call a voice from the silence in which we thread our way through immensity,—that sublime want and disease which points to the state which is man's health, and the place which is man's home,—was a prominent and life-long characteristic of Foster. At first his ideas on these matters were confused, tumultuous, wrapped in deepest gloom ; for a time, a ray as of dawning light seemed to fall on them, and he was joyous and full of hope ; then this again proved but an earthly meteor, and no true herald

of day ; finally, the gloom again fell in thick shadows, but in his own hand was a lamp which made him at least secure and calm.

“ At some moments,” he says, “ life, the world, mankind, religion, and eternity, appear to me like one vast scene of tremendous confusion, stretching before me far away, and closed in shades of the most dreadful darkness,—a darkness which only the most powerful splendours of Deity can illumine, and which appears as if they never yet had *illumined it*.”

Such causes of internal unrest complicated greatly the difficulties with which Foster had to contend. As yet the light of religion shed no *definite* radiance. He had not settled for himself the old question, put so emphatically in our time, “ What think ye of Christ,—whose Son is He ?” He was not absolutely sure whether He was the Son of God, or only the supreme of finite beings. He looked eagerly in a direction different from that where rested, calm amid all tempests, the banner of the Prince of Peace. He turned for a time to Thomas Paine. The first rude accents of universal freedom, which, rude as they were, deserve our respect, caught his ear ; he spoke of the “ rights of men,” and “ all that, and all that.” Nay, with a smile of amazement, we see the gentle, pensive, musing Foster, in Dublin, hand in glove with a crew of fiery democratic Irishmen, calling himself a “ son of Brutus !”

The aspect, indeed, of this whole period of Foster’s history is that of distraction and disquiet. There is a want of settled determination, of deliberate working energy, of manlike fixedness of aim. You mark in his active life the alternation of spasmodic effort with too great relaxation of mind ; and what remain of his writings of the period bear a similar testimony. There are flashes of strong discernment in thought, and striking brilliancy in expression ; of indications of genius there is no lack ; but we ever feel that this, as he tells

us he was himself conscious, is not his rest. One thing, however, is always beyond doubt, and it is of a nature to impart to all deviations and distractions a deep value and interest. Through his whole life and thinking there burns the fire of an indestructible ardour in the search for truth, and a determination, come what may, to put up with no counterfeit; sacred and unquenchable, we see this glowing in his letters and stray sentences, a veiled radiance, but of heavenly brightness. Was not this the light that had been kindled in him when he unbosomed his youthful sorrow to Henry Horsfall?

In early life, "before the age of twenty," he commenced the practice of jotting down observations and reflections; of these he carefully copied out a copious selection, entitling them, *A Chinese Garden of Flowers and Weeds*. It is a strange medley, of great interest, and strikingly illustrative of the varying mood of his mind. It abounds in passages of beauty, and even of grandeur; at intervals we meet an observation on men and character somewhat severely true; his strong tendency towards the mysterious, his deep, devout earnestness, the excellences and the defects of his imagination, and his genuine, though somewhat restrained and impaired love of nature, all reveal themselves. He longs for what he names "an extensive atmosphere of consciousness," but which might be better characterized as a universal and tender sympathy, which, "like an *Æolian* harp," might "arrest even the vagrant winds, and make them music." Of a calm and beautiful evening we hear him say, that it is as if the soul of *Eloisa* pervaded the air. He reads *Milton*, and pictures to himself his world of spirits. He peers earnestly into the deeps of the olden eternity, and could even wish for death to snap the gravitation of earth: "I cannot wonder," he says, "that this intense and sublime curiosity has sometimes demolished the corporeal prison, by flinging it from a precipice or into the sea." Then, it may be, his imagination lapses

into a wild and freakish mood : he figures himself, in great exultation, tossing on the waves of a flaming ocean, rising sky-high on the peaks of fire ; or, he looks on a file of clouds slowly and darkly trooping along the sky before the wind, his imagination transforming them into gaunt and sullen giants, that frown grimly to the smile of the interspersed azure. Presently, in milder and higher mood, he dreams of a visitant that comes to his earnest longings from the celestial choirs ; he walks in thought by his side, propounds to him the questions he has been gathering up for eternity, listens, in revering and wondering love, to every word in reply, and thinks that he has at last found his ideal friend and his satisfying informant. Soon he is again in the throng of common men and women, making his half-cynical remarks ; he gravely lets us know that, when he goes into company, he can see the ladies taking his measure, and thinking they have it, while he knows well enough they have not nor are capable of having. Some one speaks to him of a certain " narrow-minded religionist ; " " Mr T.," he replies, " sees religion not as a *sphere*, but as a *line* ; and it is the identical line in which *he* is moving." Sometimes his satiric fancy takes a wider sweep ; and, fancying the sun an intelligence, he figures his rage and disappointment at the miserable show the world turns out for him to light up, " a tiresome repetition of stupidity, follies, and crimes."

Foster's life, during this transition period, was externally as well as internally full of vicissitude. He went from situation to situation, from England to Ireland, from Ireland to England, and from England to Ireland again, without finding a permanent resting-place. His preaching was nowhere acceptable with the mass of the people ; instead of being a centre of attraction, he was decidedly a centre of repulsion, in the congregations where he ministered. He was really and deeply defective as a preacher. His manner was exceedingly bad.

I do not doubt, also, that a tendency to excessive refining made his sermons difficult to follow. The writer over whose page a reader can pore until he has analyzed every clause and paragraph, may trace what labyrinths he chooses to enter, and may lead his readers by what thin silken thread or what faint taper-light he thinks fit; but oratory of every sort, and none the less, but rather the more, pulpit oratory, demands the strongly marked line of distinction, the bold and massive argument, the clear, broad gleam of light. Of this Foster was never fully conscious, or, if conscious of the fact, and of his want, he yet failed to amend it. It might, too, be affirmed that his tone of remark had at times an air somewhat unnatural and far-fetched; not obvious certainly, but not perfectly natural; and freshness and nature must unite to produce literary excellence. However it was, he was unsuccessful as a preacher. He went from chapel to chapel in vain; his delicacies were rejected by the body of the people: they desired bread. There were generally a few who esteemed his teaching very highly.

To trace Foster's external career in all its changes during these ten years is uncalled for. His general course of life can be easily conceived. He spent much time in musing. By the banks of the Tyne, and in the meadows about Newcastle, he might have been seen, pensive and thoughtful, his eye often abstracted, yet at times lit up with a glance of keenest scrutiny and shrewdness. At Chichester, where we find him a few years afterwards, he used to pace the aisles of his chapel, in the silent moonlight, thinking earnestly; and it seems to have been in those still hours that wider and calmer views touching time and eternity, God and man, gradually opened up before him.

One or two extracts from his correspondence of this time will best illustrate his mental condition:—

“I sometimes fall into profound musings on the state of

this great world, on the nature and the destinies of man, on the subject of the question, 'What is truth?' The whole hemisphere of contemplation appears inexpressibly strange and mysterious. It is cloud pursuing cloud, forest after forest, and Alps upon Alps. It is in vain to declaim against scepticism. I feel with an emphasis of conviction, and wonder, and regret, that almost all things are covered with thickest darkness, that the number of things to which certainty belongs is small. I hope to enjoy the sunshine of the other world. One of the very few things that appear to me not doubtful is the truth of Christianity in general." These are suggestive words. The earnest, religious Foster, gazes forward and around ; in every direction he sees stretching away the infinitude of wonder, in which floats our little world, and his eye falls only on thick tempestuous gloom ; he turns almost in despair from the clouded heaven, and longs for the sunlight of eternity. On one point he is assured : but it is not sufficient to give him rest and satisfaction. Christianity came from God : this he accepts as a general proposition. And while he doubts not of this, while he deliberately and immoveably believes that the Maker has broken silence in time, and spoken to the creature in Christianity, he is severed by an unfathomable gulf from every variety of mere philosophic morality, from all that can be called bare natural religion. Yet this is not enough to give him rest ; general beliefs never bring stable tranquillity. He knows that God has spoken : but can a reasonable being, so believing, rest while he has no definite conviction of the import of what He has said ?

There is progress indicated in the next, "Oh, what a difficult thing it is to be a Christian ! I feel the necessity of reform through all my soul. When I retire into thought, I find myself environed by a crowd of impressive and awful images ; I fix an ardent gaze on Christianity, assuredly the



last best gift of Heaven to men ; on Jesus the agent and example of infinite love ; on time as it passes away ; on perfection as it shines beauteous as heaven, and, alas ! as remote ; on my own beloved soul which I have injured, and on the unhappy multitude of souls around me ; and I ask myself, Why do not my passions burn ? Why does not zeal arise in mighty wrath to dash my icy habits in pieces, to scourge me from indolence into fervid exertion, and to trample all mean sentiments in the dust ? At intervals I feel devotion and benevolence, and a surpassing ardour ; but when they are turned towards substantial, laborious operation, they fly and leave me spiritless amid the iron labour. Still, however, I do confide in the efficacy of persistive prayer ; and I do hope that the Spirit of the Lord will yet come mightily upon me, and carry me on through toils, and suffering, and death, to stand in Mount Zion among the followers of the Lamb !”

As probably every man of high moral and intellectual endowment, Foster, in the first ardour and poetry of youth, had looked upon perfection as it shone beauteous as heaven ; he had felt profoundly and unaffectedly that the world is not dressed in those robes of purity and beauty in which it could possibly have come from the hand of an infinite God. He recognised the universal imperfection, and felt it most keenly in his own bosom. At times his heart would burn with an ardour that appeared unquenchable ; he seemed to shout for the battle, and to rush out to confront the foe : but the world stood there in its armed and serried ranks, its thousand eyes looking stony defiance and inflexible hate ; he dropped his weapon, and recoiled before the iron labour. But he has made progress. A general belief in Christianity has become an earnest personal straining of the eye towards Jesus ; though all on earth fail him, and though his own heart harbours traitors, yet is there an ever-living Spirit of the Lord, and His ear can be reached by a mortal by persistive prayer.

"Every new reflection," he writes, "tells me that my evangelic determinations ought to be, and every hope flatters that they will be, irreversible. Assembling into one view all things in the world that are important, and should be dear, to mankind, I distinguish the Christian cause as the celestial *soul* of the assemblage, evincing the same pre-eminence, and challenging the same emphatic passion, which, in any other case, *mind* does beyond the inferior elements ; and I have no wish of equal energy with that which aspires to the most intimate possible connection with Him who is the life of this cause, and the life of the world."

Yet again, writing to his friend Hughes, he says :—"The gospel is to me, not a matter of complacent speculation only, but of momentous use, of urgent necessity. I come to Jesus Christ because I need pardon, and purification, and strength. I feel more abased, as He appears more divine. In the dust I listen to his instructions and commands. I pray fervently in His name, and above all things, for a happy union with Him. I do, and will, proclaim Him. For His sake I am willing to go through evil report and good report. I wish to live and die in His service. Is not this some resemblance of 'the simplicity' of the fishermen, on which you insist with emphasis? This spirit, my dear friend, is in a certain degree to be, I trust, divinely augmented—assuredly mine. The Galilean faith has gained the ascendant," &c.

"The Galilean faith has gained the ascendant!" After all doubting and striving, this is the resting-place ; he sits like a child at the feet of Jesus. Silently as the sleep of returning health, there steals over the mind of Foster that peace which was the legacy of our Master. True, his contentings are not yet at an end, darkness and dismay at times seem still closing round him ; but he now discerns his work, he now sees the goal, he can now measure the enemy's force, and knows Who is fighting on his side ; stern as he may feel

the contest to be, mournfully slight as may be his impression on the ranks of the foe, he knows that, one good day, the battle will be won.

His intellectual position he thus defines :—"My opinions are in substance decidedly Calvinistic. I am firmly convinced, for instance, of the doctrines of original sin, predestination, imputed righteousness, the necessity of the Holy Spirit's operation to convert the mind, final perseverance, &c. &c. As to the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, I do not deny that I had once some degree of doubt, but not such a degree ever as to carry me anything near the adoption of an opposite or different opinion. It was by no means disbelief; it was rather a hesitation to decide, and without much, I think, of the vanity of speculation. But for a long while past I have fully felt the necessity of dismissing subtle speculations and distinctions, and of yielding a humble, cordial assent to the mysterious truth, just *as* and *because* the Scriptures declare it, without inquiring, 'How can these things be?'"

Thus had Foster, now in his twenty-ninth year, arrived at that momentous epoch in a man's life when he can feel with a good conscience that his work is found, and that, until his allotment of time is spent, he is delivered from the fickle and distempered sway of change. The period of this consummation was auspiciously marked by another of equally happy omen. About this time he met one whom he could entirely love, and who reciprocated the affection.

A few words will be well spent in glancing at this last happy crisis in Foster's life. In judging of one who has been so widely characterized as a misanthrope and impersonation of cold intellectual sternness, it may be of some avail to know assuredly how he acted as lover, as father, and as husband.

The biography of Foster, by his friends Messrs Ryland and Sheppard, ought ere now to have dissipated the idea that he

was unsocial. Possessed of delicate sympathies and high intellectual tastes, he was, of necessity, sensible of something alien and uncomfortable in an atmosphere of dulness, presumption, or frivolity ; but he enjoyed, with a more lively relish than is anywise common, the gentle, animating influence of noble converse.

This fact is attested, and the assurance we have that there was no total absence of light and poetical ingredients in Foster's character is confirmed, by his short series of letters to Miss Caroline Carpenter, a young lady who attracted his attention before he met her who became his wife. These are quite in the tone of a sentimental scion of chivalry. He waxes very gallant. He is not perhaps in exact drawing-room costume ; the clank of the chain armour may be heard, half-muffled by the silken doublet ; even in his mood of extreme politeness, he cannot be weak or frivolous. He does not attain a faultless ball-room idiom ; he has always had something to say, so that he has not had practice in the art of piquantly and simperingly saying nothing. Perhaps, for a man like Foster, the thing transcends the limited human faculties. "Pure, involuntary, unconscious nonsense," Southey thought, "is inimitable by any effort of sense." But no one can read these letters without recognising a fine youthful strength of emotion, a genial heartiness and warmth, removed very far from aught allied to austerity. Miss Carpenter died young.

It was not until he attained his thirtieth or thirty-first year, that Foster met the lady to whom he was afterwards married. She was a woman cast in no common mould. Her faculties and her will were powerful ; her feelings were of great strength, and rested more deeply in her breast than is usual in her sex ; her character was completed and crowned by earnest Christianity. She had entered regions of contemplation far beyond those of ordinary minds, and her deep musings on the dark and wonderful in human destiny had

imparted to her character a stateliness and solemn repose. She was an earnest, intellectual woman, sensible to high ambitions, and fitted every way to be the friend and counsellor of a true man. Foster addressed his essays to her ; she could judge of them sternly and well. She was able to sympathize with him in his highest moments. Nay, she was perhaps by one shade too congenial with Foster ; another gleam of sunlight had been a clear advantage. A friendship such as can exist only between noble spirits arose between them, a friendship founded in natural, unforced sympathy, and growing by the waters of immortality. After two years of intimacy, it began to lose its name in the intensity of love, and they resolved to become knit in the closest bonds with which friendship can be bound on earth. Five years still elapsed ere they were married. Foster's preaching could not be depended on for a livelihood ; and it was only when he became permanently connected with the *Eclectic Review*, that he took home his friend, and called her wife. After five years waiting, he did this with signal joy. All nature, he tells us, seemed brightening around him ; Spring advanced with a new smile ; the very roses that wreathed the young year's brow caught new radiance from the dawning hope.

The married life of Foster was such as might have been hoped for. There had been no taint in the original affection. There had been no base thought of gold. Nor had he married in the blindness of passion. For this, too, is a fatally erroneous course. Men are to marry in emotions they share with the angel ; not with the animal. Foster knew that when, in the calm and real atmosphere of life, the fever of love's first intensity was cooled, and passion's fine frenzy had passed away, he would still see in the eyes of his Maria the immortal sympathy of friendship, deeper than sex, stronger than passion, fadeless to eternity. Perhaps the severest form of human sorrow, that which most nearly approaches the slow

gnawing agony of him fixed hopeless on the immoveable rock, arises from marriage in which there never was any friendship, but the original bond was earthly passion, arrogating to itself, with the impudent lie of a harlot, the heavenly name of love. It is only base natures that are beguiled by the vulgar glare of gold, natures incapable of lofty joy or acute sorrow. But passion is a Syren of more winning song, of more fatally charming lure ; the warm, the impulsive, the noble, fall victims to her, and, after a short delirious dream, awake to a life of hopeless misery. Friendship and love must unite in every married union where happiness can be reasonably expected or truly deserved : and friendship is an affection arising from pure sympathy of spirit, independent of aught else. Let none look for happiness in marriage who are unable deliberately and firmly to declare, that it would be a happiness to live together for life, though they were of the same sex. I state this with some breadth, and do so with consideration ; I point to a hidden rock round which the ocean seems to smile in sunny calm, but on which many a noble bark has perished. Foster's marriage was such as beseems a man. The affection began in friendship ; and around this, as around a rod of heaven's gold, the flowers and fruits of earth's pure love, those tender joys and beloved interests which a bounteous and motherly nature fails not to supply, when man has rightly and valiantly performed his part. gradually and gracefully came to cluster.

“ In passion's flame

Hearts melt, but melt like ice soon harder froze.

True love strikes root in reason ’

Foster was never compelled, in his moments of lofty thought and exalted sentiment, to withdraw himself, even by silence, from her who was to sojourn with him inseparably on earth ; he did not, in the presence of others, treat his wife's remarks frivolous, or her opinions as slight : he found in her

sympathy, and accorded her the natural habitual respect, of friendship. And let no one think that their happiness was merely negative,—a monotonous and insipid respect or admiration, instead of the warm, enthusiastic, unutterable intensity of love. Love cast its golden anchors in their heart of hearts, affecting every pulse of their being.

And a genial home they had ; natural fountains of childish mirth and parental pride continually welling up within it. Long after his marriage Foster wrote thus :—"I have noticed the curious fact of the difference of the effect of what other people's children do and our own. In the situations I have formerly been in, any great noise and racket of children would have extremely incommoded me, if I wanted to read, think, or write. But I never mind, as to any such matter of inconvenience, *how much* din is made by *these* brats, if it is not absolutely in the room where I am at work. When I am with them, I am apt to make them, and join in making them, make a still bigger tumult and noise, so that their mother sometimes complains that we all want whipping together." The happiness here is very real. The fact of "these brats" being privileged is not unexampled. Jean Paul, when resolute performance of duty made him deny himself even his ordinary meals, yet professed his inability to deny himself the interruption of his children. No further refutation is required of what has been alleged touching Foster's sternness in his own household : this single passage, casting, as it does, a light before and after, is the condensation of a thousand proofs that every member of his family was a note in a perfect harmony, and that, in the fine music which was the result, the silver treble of childhood rung clearly and cheerily. Look at that father as he rises from his work, yielding to the fond and joyous impulse of his breast, snatching up his children, tossing them in the air, and becoming merely the biggest and loudest child of the group : then endeavour to suit the part

he acts to the grave, stern, grimly intellectual Foster of whom you have heard.

A disorder in his throat, together with his striking unpopularity, made it now advisable for Foster to relinquish regular preaching. His virtual profession became literature. During a protracted life he brought his influence to bear on his age through the press. His residence was for the most part the vicinity of Bristol. There he worked steadily, in the heart of a peacefully happy home, cheered by the sympathy of a noble wife and the glad looks of his own children. In the following paragraphs, I shall endeavour first to define generally the attitude in which he stood to God and man; and shall then more particularly refer to certain of the remarkable points in his system of opinion.

When the restlessness of youth began to settle into the seriousness of manhood, Foster seems to have looked more earnestly into "the abysmal deeps of personality," into his own soul, than ever formerly. He found it not what a spirit endowed with power to know its Author could normally, and by original intention, be; it was an exception and anomaly in the works of Him who formed the lily and the star. And this imperfection he perceived to be singular in its character. The consciousness of himself and his race, written deep and ineffaceable, as in eternal adamant, proclaimed man to be a being, in such sense free, that he was responsible. The stain on the flower and the speck in the star were innocent imperfection: the stain on his soul was guilt. Man stood on the peaks of the world, where no other creature born of earth could come; and, as to him alone it was given to gaze upward and onward to the infinitude of spiritual glories, so for him alone existed the possibility of an infinite descent. In so mysterious and awful a system of relations, it was of unspeakable moment that it should be certainly known that there was a living and governing God. This central truth



seems never to have been questioned by Foster. Nor did he ever seriously doubt whether this God had actually and specially spoken in the Bible. His doubts attached mainly to the mode in which the word "Christ" was to be taken,—as the word of reconciliation, of explanation, of healing,—the explicative formula of the universe,—the ladder between time and eternity, between God and man. Whether Christ was God, or only a sublime created being, was for a time to him doubtful. He questioned, he hesitated, he speculated. But as his mind matured, and to the eye of contemplation the universe seemed to deepen and widen around him, he became gradually more and more impressed with the feebleness of human speculation, and the strength of simple, if honest and earnest, faith. He became keenly alive to the mystery which envelops human things when contemplated by human reason. The poor finite creature stood on his little world, and cast out the measuring line of his tiny intellect into the abysses of infinitude; for a little space it seemed to live; for one little moment it seemed to be piercing the darkness, like those darting threads of light seen in November; but then it was swallowed up in the infinite hollow of the night. He heard afar the music of the redeemed; he looked to the heaven of perfect holiness; he earnestly yearned thither; but guilt obscured the sky, and speculation could not pierce the gloom. The infinite value of a definite declaration on the part of the living God became then manifest; it seemed plain to his uncontrolled reason that the Bible afforded such, in pronouncing Christ the equal of the Father, the Infinite God. If this truth was mysterious, it was at least certain: speculation, while unable to penetrate mystery, had at the same time promoted doubt; but here doubt was slain. He accepted the truth in question. Believing definitely in the divinity of Christ, and resolving to take the facts of the universe as God had first fixed and then revealed them, he adopted the general system of belief which

has been that of so many of earth's most earnest and mighty thinkers. He consented to see mankind as a drop of water resting in the hollow of Jehovah's hand ; he subscribed to all the essential articles of that reading of man's destiny and God's revelation, known now for several ages as Calvinism. Such was Foster's final religious attitude.

The political ground which he came to assume was worthy of himself as a man and a Christian. When the atmosphere of the world was all in vibration with the shouts of joy, of triumph, and of hope—when many nations seemed about to join in choral dance around a freedom arrayed in the snowy robe—when love was finally to become lord of all, and science, the minister of love, to vanquish even death—it was not to be wondered at that Foster, for a time, almost exulted in his humanity, and forgot the chains which may cramp and degrade the soul bound by no external bondage. He took up, as we have seen, with sons of Brutus and the writings of Tom Paine : perhaps the tough old world was to be renovated even so ! But the earnestness of his being, the singleness of his eye, could not but dissipate such delusions. Gradually the romantic light was seen to fade from human history and human nature. Like a true and valiant man, he dared to look until he saw the worst ; and as he gazed, with determined though saddening eye, he could not but perceive that a long dark cloud, murky as the smoke of hell, shadowed the generations of men ; that shouts of riot and revelling might rise above it, and gleams of wild mirth break through, but that, in general, it formed the fitting canopy of the lazaret-house, the scaffold, and the battle-field. The time when tyranny and misery were to sink into a common grave, he was compelled to allow, had not yet come. He awoke startled from his dream of Eden, as at the flash of the cherubic swords. But how did he act ? Terror-stricken, like a nervous child, at the shouts of blasphemy and the deluge of blood, did he

tremble, and shriek, and rush back into the arms of the nurse, —into old Toryism, and the worship of “whatever king doth reign?” Having looked long on the mountain, did he conclude no Moses would ever descend, and bow down to the golden calf of despotism? No. He took a position worthy of a man who could look deliberately and choose firmly; who could hear above the dinning present the great voices of all time; a far truer position than many great men of his and our time. It was manlier than Southey’s, saner than Shelley’s, more stable and honest than Byron’s. He held by the great fact that, however defaced, however distorted, however contaminated, freedom is in essence eternally noble; and by the kindred fact, that despotism, however tempered, however embellished, is by nature poisonous and vile. For the present, the graceful and musical motions of the free had passed into the mad writhings and convulsive leapings of anarchy. But he did not therefore believe the devil’s elaborate lie, that, because he had power to bring evil out of good, it was a right and hopeful attempt to bring good out of essential evil.

“ Lord of unceasing love,  
From everlasting Thou! we shall not die.  
These, even these, in mercy didst Thou form,  
Teachers of Good through Evil, by brief wrong  
Making Truth lovely, and her future might  
Magnetic o’er the fix’d untrembling heart.”

It were difficult to conceive a more striking or conclusive proof of the soundness and unimpaired vigour of Foster’s intellect; after having brought his reason reverently to accept “incredibilities,” than is afforded by the fact that, after the fierce revulsion in his ideas caused by the French Revolution, he still held, and continued with unchanging resolution during life to hold, by the standard of freedom.

When we come more closely to survey Foster’s system of thought, as displayed in his writings and embodied in his

life, we are met by one great belief which casts its shadow over the whole. This is the belief in man's depravity. Human iniquity, wherever he looked, seemed to pollute all, to pervert all. There is a certain gloomy sublimity in his tearful gaze along the centuries. Where his eye falls, all seems to become dark. As a storm in the high Alps has been observed to hush the songs of the birds, and cast every gleaming point into shade, so earth's boasted virtue and grandeur faded in the look of Foster. You pointed him to the great and good of the past, the wise and heroic, whose names are the pride of nations : These, he said, were but the mountain-peaks, that rose, few and solitary, into the sunlight, while a world of ignorance, wretchedness, and crime, weltered below. You told him of the literary masterpieces of bygone ages, of sublime thoughts set in the perennial jewellery of poetic beauty : These, he replied, were flowers, for the most part gaudy and ungraceful, growing on a putrid mass. You spoke of the benign agencies which have been at work and are still at work on man ; of the powers of science, of the refinements of literature, of the gentle rain of education in the atmosphere of earth, and the sunlight of religion coming down from heaven : a sad smile passed over his features as he deeply muttered, There is a power in man's heart, when acted upon by the devil, to transform all these into "the sublime mechanics of depravity !"

This fearful thought was ever present with Foster, and was ever a fountain of woe. The sovereign power in man's nature he saw to have been dethroned, man's crown had fallen from his head, man's moral gravitation towards the centre of the universe had been mysteriously broken. Foster looked upon sin simply as an evil, an incalculable evil. Was he not right ? Is it not inconsiderate, and indicative of a want of sober and careful reflection, to indulge in such expressions regarding our fallen state as are met with in the present day ? Is not

the individual and distinctive nature of sin lost sight of? It is spoken of as mere imperfection, as little more than what affords an opportunity or a battle-field for goodness. Whereas it seems plain that its peculiar nature arises from its connection with a free, willing being, as related to a supreme, love-deserving Father, that it is inextricably intertwined with the idea of personality, and that its least speck is in an essential and unqualified sense vile. The supposition of sin's existence in any world of God's creation besides our own, was to Foster an idea of acute pain; and I confess that I sympathize with him. I cannot but disagree with a brilliant and able, but somewhat incautious, writer of the day, in his remarks on this part of Foster's views. There may be sublimer employment to be found in the universe than battling to the death with the devil and his angels! It is unsafe to familiarize ourselves with the idea that sin came into God's creation for its decoration. From eternity to eternity, from world to world, sin was, is, and will be—damnable. There is, indeed, a sublime aspect of its connection with man's destiny, which Foster did not fail to perceive; it is a sublime office to battle for light, were it in a world that quivered on the smoke of hell; let us not shrink from the combat! But what we struggle against is eternally vile, and there is no sublimity, but endless shame, worthy of an agony to freeze our very tears, in much that it has entailed on humanity. Is there any sublimity in the fact, that a man cannot grasp the hand of his brother without the possibility of its one day striking a dagger to his heart? Why is it that the smile, and the complacent gesture, and the softly-tuned word, and all those dear emblems of kindness which shed a lingering starlight over life, can be mimicked, and debased, and turned into the dead paint of what is called politeness and etiquette, to hide the sepulchral rottenness of false hearts? When the friend you have loved for years turns treacherously against you for gold, is there sublimity in the fact? Is it

not the agony of infinite shame that rises in our bosoms, as we read that the mode of expression which nature has given for the last speechless tenderness of love, was that by which a Judas betrayed a Jesus? Wander through the dreary vistas of time : look into the caverns of the Inquisition ; see the flames encircling that queenly maiden of eighteen who had rescued her country ; gaze into the swollen eyes of Beatrice Cenci ; stand by the scaffold of Leonora Schœning : then tell us of the sublimity of man's destiny. Look at that streak of hell-brought slime, foul and inexpungeable, darker than mist or rain-cloud on the purity of Mont Blanc, which blackens the lofty snow of Bacon's brow, and then speak of the sublimity of man's destiny. Worst, far worst of all, why is it that in our own hearts a hellish venom lurks ? The external battle were slight, if it were all. But it is not so. Why is it that we feel the suggestion of generosity ever cramped by some small insinuation of self ? Why is it that only at rarest moments can we rise to the feelings of noblest friendship with man, or pure devotion to God ? Why is it that, unless we are utterly lost to nobleness, or utterly blind to our own state, we are so often "replenished with contempt?" Sin has done all this. We have heard enough of sublimity ; let us change our tone a little. Not death alone, and pain, and disease, has this hellish agency brought along with it ; but as it were the very rottenness and repulsive horror of death ; ingratitude, cowardice, sloth, uncleanness, treachery. Sin is the blackness of all light, the defilement of all purity, the all-embracing formula for what is ignoble. Let us have self-denial and nobleness enough to hope that our poor world is the only tainted spot in the universe of God.

Foster's intense conception of sin is the key to much in his system of thought. This we shall find as we proceed.

We have seen that his ultimate belief was that which is commonly designated Calvinism. But there was one point

on which he rejected its dogma ; he never believed in the eternity of hell torments. There are few passages in literature more profoundly interesting than the long letter in which he details his belief, and its grounds, on this solemn subject : of all the writings of Foster, it is that which at once reveals to us most of his character, and draws the heart towards him with the tenderest feelings of affection.

The source of his belief here was twofold : the eye-to-eye vividness with which his imagination painted before him the horrors of eternal destruction, and the trembling sensibility with which he looked upon any fellow-creature in pain. Both of these are revealed in the following brief, but inexpressibly touching, extract :—" It often surprises me that the fearful doctrine sits, if I may so express it, so easy on the minds of the religious and benevolent believers of it. Surrounded immediately by the multitudes of fellow-mortals, and looking abroad on the present and back on the past state of the race, and regarding them, as to the immense majority, as subjects of so direful destination, how *can* they have any calm enjoyment of life, how can they even be cordially cheerful, how can they escape the incessant haunting of dismal ideas, darkening the economy in which their lot is cast ? I remember suggesting to one of them such an image as this :— Suppose the case to be that he knew so many were all doomed to suffer, by penal infliction, a death by torture, in the most protracted agony, with what feelings would he look on the populous city, the swarming country, or even a crowded, mixed congregation ? But what an infinitesimal trifle that would be, in comparison with what he does believe in looking on these multitudes. How, then, can they bear the sight of the living world around them ? "

Read these words, and judge of the heart of Foster. With what a trembling, earnest hand, did he trace them ! What a world of tender emotion, of mild but intense human sym-

pathy, of deepest love, they show ! And how beautiful, though sad, is the simplicity that breathes through the passage ! In perfect unconsciousness he writes, all unthinking of the rugged bosoms of his fellow-men, forgetful that each has his own little circle of work, with its own little circle of dust, encompassing it and him, and very much shutting out the rest of the world. Of a thousand men, probably not one has any definite conception of what the common belief implies. The imagination is too dull to conceive it ; the heart is too hard to feel it. But Foster's intense conceptive power led him in thought into the very bosom of hell ; there he saw human eyes fixed in the agony of eternal despair, there he listened to the endless, hopeless wailings of his brethren ; and his heart was steeled by no hard worldliness, by no wild fanaticism, against sympathy with their woes ; he seemed to feel that, were he himself among the celestial bands, the knowledge that those with whom he had once been a fellow-sojourner were in keen and everlasting anguish, would make him weep upon the plains of heaven. He thought not of himself ; all his pain and sorrow came of sympathy. If ever in the breast of man there was a heart more tremulously tender than a woman's or a child's, that heart was John Foster's.

Such was the source of his belief respecting God's punishment of sinners. The argument to which he was led can be briefly summed up. After painting fearfully the horrors of eternal woe, he deliberately adds : " I acknowledge my inability (I would say it with reverence) to admit this belief, together with a belief in the Divine goodness,—the belief that ' God is love,' that his tender mercies are over all his works." He did not pass on to a belief in immediate and promiscuous redemption : " On *no* allowable interpretation do they" (the words of Scripture on the subject) " signify less than a very protracted duration, and a formidable severity."

The above may fairly be said to be Foster's one argument ;



the aids he seeks from Scripture to his views are at best but attempts to open a path to a possible warrant on its part. And, in truth, it seems well-nigh the only argument of strength which can be urged on that side. Let it not, however, be thought that the position of those who adduce it is weak. It is not only strong, but, in one point of view, absolutely unassailable. If John Foster, or any man, deliberately and honestly conceives it irreconcilable with infinite love that God should condemn the wicked to everlasting punishment, I see not how he can accept the fact without blasphemy. If a man's reason, gazing earnestly and reverently, with lively consciousness of its own faint and glimmering vision, and full thought of the compass and might of infinite love guiding infinite power, is yet unable, I say not to justify, but to believe in, the *possible* justice of eternal torments, I see not how he can accept the doctrine. It is not lawful for any man, taking the sentence, "God is love," to use it as a fiery rod, though it were of celestial gold, wherewith to sear the eyeballs of his reason. One man, considering long, and searching Scripture, can, with no outrage on his moral being, embrace in one view the courts of eternal joy and the prison of eternal darkness, and believe unconstrainedly that the King who sits over both is Love; such an one was Jonathan Edwards. But another man cannot do so; and if he is as honest and reverent as the last, who is there on earth that can accuse him? Deeply and solemnly earnest was Foster: one seems to see a dark cloud labouring along that letter, dropping tears on its way. I do not subscribe to his belief on the point; his view was somewhat contracted, and, by a more mature consideration of what is revealed to us of God's dealings and designs in the creation of man, and a warrantable though careful borrowing of light from other quarters, it might have undergone important and advantageous change; but how, with his premises, he could avoid his conclusion, I cannot see.

So profoundly difficult is the whole question of eternal punishment, and so intimately is it allied with a series of questions that have baffled, and surely will for ever baffle, human reason, that there is perhaps no conceivable case in which one would more carefully avoid peremptory or upbraiding dogmatism. Poor finite beings, treating such a question, may well bear with each other !

I do no more at present than offer a general and preliminary remark, defining, in some measure, the conditions of the question, and indicating what every man, in coming to a decision regarding it, has, so to speak, to take along with him.

In a volume of sermons, published some time since by Mr Theodore Parker of America, the matter is treated in the following off-hand, easy manner :—" You look on the base and wicked men who seem as worms in the mire of civilization, often delighting to bite and to devour one another, and you remark that these also are the children of God ; that He loves each of them, and will suffer no ancient Judas nor modern kidnapper to perish ; that there is no child of perdition in all the family of God ; but He will lead home his sinner and his saint, and such as are sick with the leprosy of their wickedness, ' the murrain of beasts,' bowed down, and not able to lift themselves up, He will carry in his arms !"

Is it possible to believe that there is not in this something essentially wrong ? Is the subject, then, after all, one of such wayside plainness, such fair and sunny simplicity ? Are the clouds and thick darkness that have from the olden time mysteriously veiled the future, and cast their shade over intellects like those of Luther, Calvin, Leibnitz, Pascal, and Jonathan Edwards, to roll away before a soft summer gale of sentimentality ? I cannot believe it. I can scarce conceive aught more diametrically opposed to the mightiest instincts that have swayed nations, and the most earnest beliefs which have been arrived at by great individual thinkers. What real thinker

has there been from Plato to Dante, from Dante to Calvin, and from Calvin, I shall add, to Carlyle, who has not recognised something unspeakably stern, something to create a solemn awe, in the general structure and relations of this universe? Were nature all sunny and cloudless; were the sea at all times glassy and still, or the pathway only of the spiced and gentle wind, leading along the white sail as if it were an infant of Ocean; were there only soft flowery lawns and May mornings, and no volcanoes or avalanches; were there but the smiles of birth-day and of bridal upon human faces, no furrow traced by tears, no wrinkle writ by age, no shadow cast by coming death; were human history one joyous chime, ascending from the green earth to meet and mingle with the angels' music, broken by no wailings of sorrow, no shrieks and groans of battle; had the slopes of Olivet been ever mantled with the vine, and rung only to the song of the vintage, and never seen the crosses by thousands in the grey morning; did the human eye, as years go on, gather brightness, and beam with ever a clearer and prouder gladness, and were it not a fact that the eye of every man or woman of well advanced years has one expression giving tone to the others, vanishing, it may be, for an hour, but always returning, and that an expression of sorrow; then might we have heart to join Mr Parker in his soft and child-like strain. But whenever we assay to do so, are we not confronted by immovable facts, by this one great fact,—MISERY; and does not our tongue then cleave to the roof of our mouth? Has it been all a mistake by which men have ever regarded death as dark and calamitous, and its infliction as the severest form of punishment? What means the smoke of those sacrifices rising from every nation on earth to an angry deity? Who put that word into the mouth of conscience, giving along with it a power to compel all men to listen, which declares man responsible, and the sinner in danger? Surely the assertion that these phenomena have refer-

ence solely to the inconveniences entailed on the sinner, in this life requires no refutation. God has not averted the painful effects of sin in this world ; He let Judas go to his despairing death, and a devil even on earth gnawed the heart of Saul ; by what argument can we conclude that He will totally avert the effects of sin in the next, and place Judas and Stephen alike within the light of His throne ? "Infinite pity, yet also infinite rigour of law : it is so nature is made ; it is so Dante discerned that she was made." These are the words of Mr Carlyle.

Most of the ideas abroad regarding Foster have it for their basis that, even though his personal kindness were conceded, he must still, in his capacity as a public teacher, be pronounced morbid through excess of gloom. In a noted disquisition upon his character, it is sententiously stated that his tenderest emotions were acts of ratiocination. Perhaps precisely the most important lesson he conveyed to his age may be brought to light by inquiring into the truth of such statements.

Foster's tremulous sensibility, and his vivid and sleepless imagination, gave him what may be called a perpetual consciousness of human misery. The misanthrope says men are bad, worthy to be hated, and deserving their sorrow : Foster also said men were bad ; but he heard love whispering that they were weak, and hatred for their sin was drowned in pity for their suffering.

" Never morning wore

To evening, but some heart did break."

Foster seemed to hear it break. Do we not, as may be worth noting, see so much in his portrait ? Is not the expression which gives it tone that of tender, yearning affection ? Sorrow and misgiving are in the eye, but they seem to float in pity and love. There is something of trouble in the earnest, inquiring glance, telling of long pondering, and of a high cu-

riosity not to be satisfied ; but there is neither indignation nor disdain. If the lip is faintly curled, it is not with contempt ; it seems to tremble with a sad and extorted confession, that human effort is all but vain in assuaging human woe. As we look, are we not vividly reminded of the lines by Keats :—

“ Anxious, pitying eyes,  
As if he always listened to the sighs  
Of the goaded world ?”

These words are precisely descriptive of Foster's habitual cast of mind. His face is not hopeful, it is not joyous ; but if one emotion is absent, it is that of contemptuous hatred ; and if one is present, it is that of scarcely hoping love.

Foster was a stern teacher. Looking with penetrative vision over human history, and entering by imaginative power into every scene and region of misery,—looking on ancient history, and seeing, “ by its faint glimmer,” that it had been “ an ocean of blood,”—and marking how, in modern times, even the celestial light of Christianity had but faintly and fitfully irradiated the gloom of earth,—he turned round, with the austerity of earnestness and the sadness of love, and proclaimed in solemn accents, that the world was no joyful garden, but a sterile desert, its wells few, its palm-trees faded, and resting, as under a sky of iron, beneath the curse. Let the shout of triumph, he said, die away : brethren, these are no cool, tranquil lakes ; these towers and palaces are not of pearl and gold ; these are but the mockeries of our sorrow ; no man of heart will look upon them ; beneath our feet is burning sand, and it is manful to know it ; only on the far horizon gleams the serene light of our home. Gloomy, misanthropic, only half the truth, say a thousand ; alas ! it is too near the whole truth, and of it we must be at times reminded. Easy it is to paint your world ; so infinitely easier, as has been remarked, to paint it an inch deep, than to amend

it by a hair's-breadth. Heroism, virtue, domestic joys, rural bliss, the progress of the species, the sway of love, liberty, equality, and fraternity ; do you think Foster had not heard of these ? Yes ; and for a time he listened earnestly, if perchance there might be healing there ; and, even when disappointed, he held to the truth they shadowed. But how did his strong heart respond to the general advocates of freedom in our day ? How did Enceladus greet the soft frivolous accents of the gentle Clymene, who lisped her comforting syllables to the Titans ?

“ Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all  
That rebel Jove's whole armoury were spent ;  
Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,  
Could agonize me more than baby words  
In midst of this dethronement horrible.”

There are few spectacles afforded by our earth more noble in their sadness than this which we find presented by Foster, and misnamed misanthropy. It is the spectacle of a man who looks over the ranks of his brothers as they wend mournfully through time, who feels a sorrow deeper than words, striving upwards to pour itself forth, but who sternly crushes down the “climbing agony,” and compels his tears to burn only in his heart, lest they film his eye, and prevent the earnest gaze of thought from piercing into the evil. This, too, is among the duties of man ; to stand, like a kind physician, beside the writhing patient, mankind ; and, while listening to the groans, to mete the extent and virulence of the distemper, and, it may be, apply some remedy which will for the time increase the plaining. A man on earth may have too much love to weep !

The duty of man, as man, is thought. This is his distinctive regal duty. Pity and love may aid and cheer him ; but, as sovereign worker in this world, his duty is governance, guidance,—in one word, thought. And, in order to this,

he must, with a valiant calmness, know in all cases the worst.

“To bear all naked truths,  
And to envisage circumstance all calm,—  
That is the top of sovereignty.”

No man is qualified to be a public guide or instructor of men who cannot more or less do this; and a man generally is mighty in proportion as he can do it, and has a love strong enough to dare it.

But there is another aspect in which to regard Foster's gloomy representations of the human state and prospects. His position was twofold: in one point of view, it resembled that of the misanthrope; in another, it was diametrically opposed thereto. He declared the work to be stern, the battle to be a reality. But he held earnestly by his standard; he never flinched work. Hear this grand sentiment from his lips:—“All that pass from this world must present themselves as from battle, or be denied to mingle in the eternal joys and triumphs of the conquerors.” We know that he was tenderly kind, and he never for a moment flinched from the combat. This union absolutely negatives misanthropy, and the general notion which attributes misanthropy to Foster must be dissipated. He was a practical, living enforcement, with a new and peculiar energy, of the great lesson that every man must work. However dark the aspect of the field, though no higher hope exists for you than to lie cold and stiff while your brethren go on to victory, you must yet fight on. Comparatively easy is it to struggle when hope is bright, although this also is noble; but far more difficult is it to know all the hazards and toils of the combat, to see no prospect that individual might will perceptibly avail, and yet to keep the sword unbared, and never dream of returning it to the scabbard. This is that high form of virtue which is missed by the real misanthrope; and it Foster attained. He who comprehends his position here has understood his life; here lies the problem of his biography.

We find this gloom, then, of which we have heard so much, to be a right noble, a sublime melancholy. In the strength of youth Foster's hopes had been high ; his eye had caught the distant gleaming of paradisaical fields ; he had seemed to hear the sound of millennial anthems ; his heart had swelled high with emotion ; he had shouted for the battle. But he soon paused in astonished sadness. It was as if a seraph had seen from afar the new smile of our planet among the stars of God, and had come through the azure to hear the notes of its new hymn of praise, and had landed on its golden margin, and been confronted by—SIN. The sorrow that was in Foster's eye has been known by the noblest of earth. It was that sadness which shaded the brow of Plato ; such sadness was in the heart of Solomon when he said that much wisdom was much grief.

Sorrow of this kind may not be absolutely required of us, nor certainly ought it to darken the whole character. With all her sternness, nature has appointed feelings of mirth to play over the dark places of our lot. A stern mother she is, a stern destiny is ours : but sometimes, nevertheless, she does take her children in her arms and smile on and kiss them ; she does intend us to yield at times to glad impulses, to leave our brooding, to look on the sunny side of the cloud. It is a fact that at every moment bitter tears are furrowing human faces ; it is a fact that at every moment, Night, with her shrouding darkness, is closing over half the world : but it is a fact also, that at every moment some are smiling ; at every moment somewhere Morn is scattering golden light. And, above all, the Christian may be removed from overwhelming access of grief ; he

“ Whose meditative sympathies repose  
Upon the breast of Faith ;”

he who can overarch all clouds and contradictions with an infinite radiance. But the calm rejoicing of the healthful



and balanced Christian mind is removed as far as possible from flippancy or thoughtless gaiety. If our natures are of the sunny complexion, let us be glad and thankful ; but let us not forget that some of the greatest intellects of time have looked sadly on human affairs, or neglect the lesson they teach. Of these intellects, though not taking a high rank among them, was Foster's. He came near certain fatal influences, but he remained unscathed by all. He knew doubt, yet he was not driven into infidelity ; he saw difficulty, yet he was not driven into despair. He told men that the battle with principalities and powers was stern and long, and with hasty superficiality they exclaimed that he was wrapped in a garment of mere gloom. He shrunk in horror and agony from the baleful form of sin, as he saw it in the world around him ; by a sublime casting of the mantle of his love over the universe, he yearned to shut out from its rejoicing borders that mortal taint, and confine it to his own blackened world ; and they exclaimed that he was a misanthrope !

In considering the works of any powerful and sincere thinker, it is well to give a close attention to what in them is defective or erroneous. In tracing the line beyond which, by being pressed too far, truth becomes of no avail, or even, as extremes meet, rushes off to embrace error, we can mark well the lineaments of the truth itself, and comprehend, more fully than before, the work done by him whose writings we inspect. The mistakes, also, of a sincere man, and one of great influence in the world of mind, are more apt to obtain currency and produce evil, than those of one of slighter build : from gold it is worth while to separate the clay. I proceed, therefore, to state a few important defects in Foster's opinions and teaching, and to endeavour to evolve the full truth in each case.

It is not difficult to enunciate in general terms the one great want alike in Foster's powers, knowledge, and opinions.

In one word, he wanted completeness. His imagination, powerful, amazingly powerful, to draw a single figure, or a single spectacle, could not produce a full and harmonized picture. Passages in his works are, perhaps, not to be surpassed for lurid distinctness, for happy metaphor, or for clear force ; but he could not produce a complete book, or design a complete essay ; and what Dr Cheever says of his compositions, that they commence and end by no rule, and are governed by no principles of symmetry, is accurately true. His knowledge was various, and in its separate parts apparently exact ; but it was fatally deficient in method, it formed no complete system or series, beautiful to behold and easily referred to : it was like a museum packed up in the hold of a ship. His strictly intellectual power and his strictly reasoned opinions have the same characteristic. We are able to express in his own words the great principle, that "the conjunction of truths is of the utmost importance for preserving the genuine tendency, and securing the appropriate efficacy, of each ;" yet his system of opinion was by no means symmetrical. Each separate doctrine which he enforces has an aspect of truth, but often this aspect, by being made to fill the field of view, implies error. After all his pondering, he had reached no explaining theory, even of certain facts of history, which can, within limits, be accounted for, and whose allied good and evil can be discriminated. The truth of these general remarks will become manifest in the sequel.

Of the meaning and function, in the present stage of man's history as a species, of certain agencies, which must always, in their ultimate relations, be regarded with sorrow, but which subserve important purposes in the present dispensation, Foster had no clear conception. Of these agencies, by far the most remarkable is war. If all other arguments in proof of the fact that the species is fallen were swept away, the one great fact of war would put it beyond my power to

conceive a man deliberately believing his species still in that state of perfection in which God created it. But if war came with sin, it came as the red-hot iron comes with poison ; to scarify and blacken, but yet to prevent pain from becoming death. When sin entered, a great severance took place ; right and might parted company. One in the bygone eternity, again to be one in the coming eternity, in the little vexed strait of time, tossing and weltering and never at rest, which lies between the two, they severed. To say might and right are one "in the long run," is to enunciate a truism ; to say might and right are one in time, traceably and exactly one in human history hitherto, or to be so ere the species is restored to its native condition, is to deny that ever a Helot was murdered or a child oppressed. When might and right become one, War will unbrace his armour, and lie down and die. But till then, War has functions to perform. These are various, but perhaps the most important among them is this : either, in a rough and rude manner, to vindicate outraged justice and let the oppressed go free ; or, in the blood of the lost battle-field, to inscribe a perpetual testimony to the right, and a stern and dumb appeal to Heaven.

How did Foster think and speak of war ? He looked over human history with a searching and a loving eye ; he saw war followed by a pale host of woes, and moving through all time to a music of bitter wail, making man its prey : he broke into a shriek of sorrow and indignation, and never went further or altered his tone. Now, it cannot be asserted, in proof of any man's being a thinker, that he has perceived the evil of war. Since themes began to be written in academies, that was known and discoursed of. Every schoolboy has a set of tropes to illustrate it. But a profound and deliberate thinker should see farther. A mere recognition of that great necessity which has been referred to were enough to silence

a scarce manly and perpetual whining over the woes of war; but a conception even of this is not to be found in Foster. Much less did he see how war has in many ages subserved other and benign purposes. Dear-bought, indeed, have been the harvests which its red rain has made to grow, but it has made them grow. Look upon Europe at the time of the breaking up of the Roman empire; it is a case precisely in point. The appearance presented is inexpressibly awful: one scene of horror, of devastation, of tumult, from the gates of Constantinople to the pillars of Hercules. How far better had it seemed, how far higher had been the sentimental beauty, if things had continued as they were, if Rome's soft licentious slaves had gone on dawdling and lolling till now. But on that Europe God had other nations to be planted; new blood had to be introduced; and the northern hordes came down, sword in hand. It is an undeniable ethnological fact that, by the agency of the fearful wars which ensued, by the comingling of races resulting therefrom, the puny, emasculated subjects of Rome were exchanged for those nations which now, for more than a thousand years, have reared their mountain-like forms on Europe. Say, if you will, that God in that case overruled the horrors of war for the advancement of mankind; this is, indeed, the more accurate mode of expression; only learn to discern the mode in which He does overrule it, and say not that the devil alone had a hand in the matter.

Often amid the shakings of the nations, when men's hearts were failing them for fear, and in the bosoms of all the noble there was a speechless yearning for rest, God's Providence has been at work, the cloud seeming to veil love has been "itself love," and in the course of centuries the light of that love has beamed out perceptibly to all. What a profound significance now attaches to the following words of Milton, uttered in reference to that tumultuous time when "faithful

and free-born Englishmen and good Christians" were driven in multitudes, from home and country, to seek shelter in "the wide ocean and the savage deserts of America :"—"Oh, Sir, if we could but see the shape of our dear mother England, as poets are wont to give a personal form to what they please, how would she appear, think ye, but in a mourning weed, with ashes upon her head, and tears abundantly flowing from her eyes." Were the eye of John Milton now to rekindle in its dry socket, what a gleam of glory would flash from it, as he gazed over to the "savage deserts of America !" How would he now robe in poetic life the figure of England, looking to the mighty nation to which she gave birth in pains like those of dissolution ! How proudly would he now regard the Island-mother and her Titan son, entrusted by God, with the high commission of bearing the standard of freedom in the front of the peoples ! Would he not at least bow his head in wondering praise, and declare that, clearer and more powerful than ever song of bard, to justify the ways of God to man, is the silent roll of the ages ?

There might be adduced considerations of a nature somewhat similar to these, to show that pestilence and famine are not unmingled evils, that even their steps are watched of God. Nations spring again with fresh vigour to their feet, after having been cast down. Through the branches of the pruned forest rushes the stream of life with wilder energy, and gushes forth in a fresh magnificence of foliage. No fact seems more likely to be soon unfolded to the careful student of history, than that after every period of winter has come a period of spring.

With such thoughts as these Foster had no acquaintance. He could nowise see his way through history.

It were foolish to conclude, from aught that has been said, that any pleading is intended on behalf of war, famine, and pestilence. These are doomed, and the sooner they go the

better ; they point to a fearful chronic disease in the system of human affairs ; in the evolution of man's history, of God's plan in man's creation, they will vanish. Welcome shall science be, with her mild methods, thrice welcome. As war was the agency by which a sufficiently wide field was prepared for first planting the foundations of Christ's kingdom on earth ; as it was the sword of Rome which, all unconsciously of the end to be accomplished, fitted the world for Christianity in its troubled militant state ; it may be hoped that, when that kingdom is to be fully established, and the golden battlements of Zion are to cover the whole earth, the preparing agencies will be no longer those of war, but those of peace. Meanwhile, nothing is to be gained from immature attempts or Utopian expectations. Humanity is a patient difficult to deal with, and may require to be bled several times yet ; it will bleed no longer than until bleeding ceases to be a necessary agent of cure.

Reflections such as have been indicated are of great moment. They enlarge our apprehension of the wisdom of God, and show how deeply, yet unmistakeably, His designs penetrate the general framework of things : they foster a child-like, yet manful, confidence in the Almighty, and hint audibly, however the floods rage, that He sits King for ever : lastly, and in especial application to our day, they prevent men from fancying, as even earnest and able men are apt to do, that their time is the worst of times, and that the world is falling to wreck around them. They impart

" That severe content  
That comes of thought and musing ?"

they might have whispered to Southey, Arnold, and Carlyle, to possess their souls in patience. To proceed.

In all Foster's performance as a Christian instructor, there is no circumstance meriting deeper admiration than his downright advocacy of Christianity within the courts of literature.

He will have a Christian to be one in thought, word, and deed : he will listen to no compromise ; he will hear of no palliation ; him who is not with Christ he will declare to be against Him. So far well. As the old Judaistic preaching of law is obsolete, so the old philosophic preaching of virtue is obsolete ; law and virtue are both embraced, and, as it were, transfigured, in the doctrine of Christ crucified. But here, also, Foster's view was narrow and erroneous. He felt two powers contending within him. Gifted by nature with a fine sympathy for all that is beautiful and elevating, he could not but experience a thrill of richest enjoyment when any tint of real beauty met his eye, any tone of real beauty fell upon his ear ; but he had often met such in the spacious fields of literature, both ancient and modern, where he had extensively wandered, and these were, for the most part, unchristian ; the sovereign voice of religion seemed to say, that in these regions it was sinful to expatiate, and that every fruit to be plucked there, however clear and golden its beauty, must be an apple of Sodom. He took his determination. He uttered a voice of warning and condemnation. On all literature commonly called profane, he laid his ban. However pure the joy appeared, however distinctly it was from inner and native fountains of sympathy that the rapture seemed to flow, it was to be curbed, thwarted, cast aside, if the object of beauty which evoked it was not within some enclosure distinctly marked off for Christian purposes. In this his procedure is open to exception.

Two great departments of truth may be categorized and looked at in parallel lines, under the respective titles of laws of mathematics and laws of beauty. The limits of these departments, their points of divergence and of coalescence, are not our present concern. I have to speak of the laws of beauty, and introduce the laws of mathematics, for the sake of illustration. Both of them are absolute and self-depend-

ent. No one with whom men would reason doubts the absolute character of mathematical truth : it has been questioned, but is here assumed as a fact, that the laws of beauty—what is commonly called æsthetic, and what Ruskin calls theoretic, truth—are also absolutely true. In other words, however much they may seem to man to fluctuate, these laws are the writing of the Eternal mind, and are more stable than the created universe. This is now, so far as I know, the belief of all our higher thinkers ; its being questioned so largely during last century was merely the exhibition, in the region of criticism, of that scepticism characteristic of the time. The natural and usual connection between sensational theories of morals and associative theories of beauty has been ably noted by Dr M'Vicar. The ancient and noble faith is, that the laws of beauty are independent of man and removed above circumstance, precisely as the truths of geometry. The laws by which the colours of the rainbow are mingled,—by which the draped elm-branch hangs,—by which the long sweeps of mountain curve are drawn,—by which the waves bend, and wreath, and dance, with the grace of new-born Cytheras,—are as firmly established in the mind of God as the laws by which He has hung the world on nothing. Supposing this granted, let us next inquire how the human mind, in its present shattered and enfeebled condition, looks at the respective provinces of mathematic and æsthetic truth. The process by which man has unfolded the truths of mathematics is comparable to the gradual removal of the clay, limestone, or chalk, from a fossil. Line by line, the encasing substance is removed, the plates of the old scales, the forms of the old bones, are displayed ; the instant a new portion is uncovered, it is seen perfectly, and without mistake ; nothing farther is to be learned regarding it. Exactly so in mathematics : as each new proposition is unfolded, the attainment is perfect, removed from the possibility at once of doubt and improve-



ment. The human mind has retained power, by however long a process, to unveil mathematical truth perfectly. It has not been so with the laws of beauty. These may be compared rather to immoveable stars, fixed in the heavens, while far below there is a cloudy atmosphere, kept in perpetual turmoil by tempests, through which they can but gleam at moments ; up into the vault men gaze and gaze with their sin-dimmed eyes ; so wildly do the clouds roll and toss, and so feeble is their vision, that at times men are apt to turn away, and exclaim that those stars are not fixed at all, that they are mere stray meteors wandering through the cloud-rack. As yet no man has so clearly and conclusively fixed what their position and relative magnitude are, as to command universal assent ; but in no age has the eyesight of men been so dim, that stray gleams from them have not been noted, and sure though partial tidings of what they are obtained. The grand fact, however, to be remembered is this : That every gleam really discerned has been *seen* by man, not created by him ; has been a glimpse of a light of which God is the eternal fountain. For some reason, which we may well leave to His wisdom, neither the laws of mathematics nor the laws of beauty are in this world revealed specially to those who seek a re-attainment of sonship in God's house through Jesus Christ ; but, as the Christian believes in, and derives intellectual nourishment from, a new truth in mathematics, discovered by a blasphemer, he may rightfully and with good conscience look upon every beam of real beauty, though seen by an infidel, as a revelation of the thoughts and workings of his God. And the truths of beauty seem to be of a higher sort than those of mathematics. These last are the laws by which God fixed the pillars of his universe ; but beauty, we may reverently say, is His very garment ; and our greater ignorance of its laws than of the laws of mathematics is, no doubt, because, as fallen children, we cannot see our Father's face.

Truly glorious is the prospect opened up by the simple and sublime truth now feebly enunciated. It enables the Christian to go round the garden of poetry, separating the Satanic slime from paradisaical flowers, claiming all that is beautiful for his God. Thus is that teeming sympathy with loveliness, which Foster thought it necessary to restrain, nurtured to full fruition and perfect bloom. Thus all that the human imagination has in every age framed of true beauty, returns to the Christian in a new relation, and with new significance; every form of grace that the Greek saw in the dusky wood, or rising from the ocean; every fair mythic youth of Eastern song; every impersonation of summer dawn by Northern bard. The vessels of the Pagan temples, the notes of Pagan choirs, may be turned to the service of God, and even from the sterile desert of atheism be gathered angels' food. We shall see the stars though the night is around them.

The devil is darkness and defilement, but he never can cast his livery over, and compel into his service, one ray of God's light; the fact of a beautiful object's being beautiful, is equivalent to the fact that *its beauty* is from God; whatever opposition to beauty, whatever defilement, is exhibited by it, cannot extinguish its vital element; to say otherwise were Manichean. The flower that grows on the battle-field is as truly the work of God, and as perfectly reveals His beauty, as the flower that wreathes the Christian cottage; the beauty, where it is real, which has been seen and sung of by a Byron or a Shelley, may be taken by the Christian, with clear open mind, as a plant of God's rearing, though on an unwilling human soil.

The evil one must be beaten into his own grounds, and permitted to vindicate as his no spot of the territory of our Father. The earth was cursed in its relation to man; it was degraded from what it was to Adam,—a grand written scroll, its words the cloud, and flower, and mountain, the light by

which it was read that of the sun and stars, wherein, as his own heart thrilled with the angelic joy that springs from rapt sympathy with loveliness, he saw the glory and the beauty of God,—into a field and workshop of toil, where man cannot rise, on the wings of pure emotion, into the heaven of loveliness, because of the brassy dome of labour. Yet the lilies of the field were not cursed in themselves, or made less beautiful ; their beauty was only veiled to men, so that they saw it not, nor were moved by it to a sacred joy ; and we may be absolutely certain, both that every thrill of rapture awakened in us by true beauty is a noble emotion, and that, when our nature is restored to what it was, or raised higher than before, a beauty will beam upon us from every part of God's universe, till then scarce dreamed of.

Foster's conception of the fallen state of human nature, shadowing, as it did, the whole range of his opinions, led him into views respecting the means available and hopeful for the amelioration of humanity, which seem of so dangerous tendency as to require a word of comment. He looked for light from heaven in a way in which it is not now to be expected, and in which it would do little good if it came. Casting his eye upon man as an agency for the regeneration of the world, his feeling of the depth of human corruption made him almost turn from the reforming teacher or preacher in despair. True, as we have seen, he never actually flinched, but he considered the world so bad, that no terrestrial mechanism hitherto known could save it ; he desired therefore, and expected, visible supernatural assistance. It is interesting to observe the eagerness with which he grasps at any appearance of supernatural influence to account for an extraordinary religious movement ; the look of suspicion with which he regards any act of general heroism is by no means so pleasing. He strongly insinuates supernatural aid in the case of Whitefield ; perhaps the coldest and smallest remark he ever made is that in

which he seems to cling to the idea that the ministers of the Church of Scotland who left their manse in 1843 would give way when it came to the point. Foster had by no means an adequate idea of man, of his countless capabilities and countless diversities ; how, borrowing a hint from a clever writer, one might say he suggested the idea of a cross between an angel and a demon ; how the heaven-light and the hell-light mingle in his eye. And, for one thing, he had no clear idea of the mighty influence of man on man. He looked, to use his own words, for the "interference of angelic, or some other extraordinary and yet unknown, agency."

The influence, both for good and evil, that may be exerted by man upon man, it were extremely difficult to overrate. The light from the human eye flashes along a column in the battle-day like a gleam of sunlight on the bayonets ; read the history of the "Little Corporal," and you will know that to be a fact. The light of the human eye will set continents ablaze for centuries ; read the history of Mahomet and Islam for the proof of that. That light will bring the men of one-half of the world upon those of another, as the moon leads the tidal wave of ocean ; witness Peter and his Crusades. Think of the influence of Luther on the world, and of Whitefield upon immense bodies of men ; think of the sway of Knox in Scotland, and of his true successor Chalmers ; reflect, in a word, upon human history in its whole course ; and own the irresistible force of the conviction that the human eye and voice are the mightiest agencies which have acted there, whether directly as instruments of the Highest, or indirectly as such. Supernatural agency for the regeneration of the world is, indeed, to be looked for ; but such agency will not necessarily be in any other sense supernatural than it is in the conversion of every believer. Conceive the effect of a band of men with the ardour, the rapt earnestness, the immoveable valour of Paul, and the sacred enthusiasm of John ; by the

laws of human nature, they would move the world as it has never yet been moved ; and what, save such graces as may be drawn down by prayer, do Christians now require, to be such ? Our Saviour set the human for ever on a level with visible, supernatural agency, by his declaration that, "If men heard not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." This truth is of very grave import ; for, if it is our first duty to avail ourselves of all aid to be had, it is our second to ascertain in what case it is hopeless to look for assistance.

These exceptions to Foster's teaching may be brought to a conclusion by a brief glance at the subject of amusements. These, as is well known, were, on the whole, an eyesore to him : even the sports and dances of children he looked on with a scowl of disapproval and discontent. It was not, indeed, always so : of that we have had satisfactory proof ; but he did not feel at rest respecting them ; any appearance of lightness, any approach to frivolity, in so earnest a world as ours, he could not meet with the kind indulgence of sympathy. He saw what is bad in amusements, but not what is good ; he perceived not the end they serve in the present economy, if not perfect or altogether excellent themselves, in yet averting worse evils, and at lowest finding something harmless for idle hands and feet to do. He fixed his eye too exclusively on the hollowness of worldly courtesy, and, while he sneered it away, he told us not what to put in its place. The present fabric of society is, indeed, crazy and infirm, rottenness in its rafters, flaws in its iron-work, cracks in its pillars ; but all must be better and stronger ere these can be dispensed with ; pull them out with the rash hand now, and all will go into a heap of rubbish.

What is the rationale of noble amusement ? what its method, and what its end ? In the mirthful meeting, it is intended, and should be, so far as is possible, attained, that

the social instincts come into healthful and cheering play; that the latent fire of affection for our brethren and sisters, simply as such, by, as it were, the pleasing friction of concourse and converse, evolve itself on all faces in genial smiling or free laughter; that the frame, physical and psychal, sportively unbend itself without sinking into torpor, drawing refreshment and invigoration from a certain active rest, midway between sleep and labour. Such is needful for poor man, and nature has kindly given it.

Three radical errors, in three respective ways, may vitiate the philosophic perfection of amusement. The entertainment may be simply and exclusively animal; then it is ignoble in man: it may be simply mental; then it defeats its purpose: it may be destitute of true kindness, of trustful, friendly confidence; then it is false.

How do our public ball-rooms and large formal dancing parties stand the tests thus provided? Not remarkably well. True geniality is well-nigh absent. The kindness consists in becks, and bows, and ceremonies; in lispings, and simpers, and smiles; all of which were accurately put down in the dancing-master's bill. As in a farce, better or worse played, men and women *act* kindness. It is highly distinctive of the kind of entertainments now referred to, that mind is wanting. Was it not Hook who observed that dancing and intellect are in our island in an inverse ratio? It was a shrewd remark; and one thing upon which frequenters of ball-rooms, of both sexes, seem unanimous, is, that the particular persons with whom *they* have happened to dance were remarkably silly. All the inferior tribes have their amusements. Crows wheel round in the sky, sweeping in full circle, evidently in joyous sport; kittens and dogs are familiar examples; donkeys, be it known, are remarkably frisky when it is their *own* amusement they have to attend to; even sheep have been observed clumsily gamboling and kicking about

in their thick woolly vestures, and have suggested the idea of a ball-room of ladies and gentlemen threading the wreathed dance in flannel dressing-gowns. The recreation of a ball-room may produce that quickened gallop of the blood, and consequent exhilaration of animal spirits, which attend the sports of the sheep and the donkey ; and the music and champagne may be allowed, in philosophic fairness, to set the ball-room, considered as a place of animal sport, perceptibly above the playgrounds of the last-mentioned creatures ; but, when you have no friendliness, no all-persuasive play of mirth, no unlaced ease and freedom,—when you stand to each other merely in the relation of necessities to the dance,—the pleasure, however heightened, is animal in essence, and ignoble.

Relaxing amusement, however, is noble and proper, whenever it bides the tests proposed. When you can trustfully grasp the hand extended to yours ; when you know the smile on the lip that addresses you to be the speechless voice of the viewless spirit of kindness ; when you can be assured that the tongue, now tuned to soft geniality and friendliness, will not to-morrow slander your name ; when mirth flows in its natural channels, and trustful heart leaps in sympathy with trustful heart ; then all is right. And if, in such an assemblage, the joyous exhilaration will be increased by moving to harmonious sound, with gestures of beauty and vivacious grace, let no one object to the dance : the buoyant leaping of the blood is nature's ; the laws of beauty in sound and sight are nature's,—who can say they are wrong ? The rain falls no less cheerfully because the sunbeams painted the cloud with gold and vermilion ; industry and action flourish all the better for this sporting in the sunlight of mirth and gladness.

I seriously invite all persons to consider the essential accordance of this with Christianity, with the example of our Master. Never smile passed from human countenance as He entered the abode ; never child ceased to frolic because

He was near. I speak seriously, deliberately, and reverently, when I say that if, in the degenerate state of the Jews at the time, they still retained any noble melodies commemorative of the days and deeds of the first Asmoneans, He would have listened while they were sung, without commanding silence, and would have sanctioned by His sacred approval the flow of manly mirth. Because worldly amusement, as we in general find it, is unworthy of men, let us not forget that the relaxing and yet re-invigorating enjoyments of social entertainment were never frowned upon by Him whose sympathy embraced everything beautiful and true in this universe.

True and legitimate amusement may assume many forms. Our tests exclude what ought to be excluded, but make room for all else. In the freest and best relaxation, the heart will naturally turn to what draws it most, and the devout Christian may find every essential of recreating social enjoyment in sharing with others the feelings of gratitude or irrepressible love to his God which fill his own bosom. As true recreation, as pure enjoyment, may be derived from the sharing of Christian feeling, as from any other outgoing of the heart, or rather far truer and purer. Were the hymns which, at early morning, the primitive Christians sung to Jesus, less joyful than the bacchantic choruses that had made night hideous a few hours before? Nay, this form of enjoyment will ultimately swallow up all others. Meanwhile, it is bootless to scowl upon amusements; by no single edict can they be removed or reformed. Only let us always keep the end in view, and strive to be in the path of improvement. As the human mind becomes gradually elevated, and the human heart gradually deepened, this and many other reforms will come in their season.

We have thus found not a little to qualify and supplement in the works of Foster. It were quite an erroneous idea, however, if these exceptions were taken as illustrative of the



tenor of his works, or as testing their general value. The intention is rather to bear witness to their worth by endeavouring to free it of excrescence, and making it more accessible. His books are precious in a high and perennial sense. You cannot read any paragraph of them without perceiving that an earnest and lofty mind is at work. Earnestness was perhaps Foster's distinguishing characteristic ; over his page you seem to see bending the knit brow and indomitable eye of the thinker. This man, you feel, is conscious that it is a great and awful thing to be alive—to be born to that dread inheritance of duty and destiny which awaits every man that arrives on earth. He shakes from him the dust of custom ; he little heeds the sanctions of reputation ; afar off and very still, compared with a voice coming from above, he hears the trumpetings of fame : calm, determined, irresistible, his foot ever seems to press down till it reaches the basal adamant. This earnestness is made the more impressive from the manifest leaning of his mind towards the gloomy and mysterious. Of habits of thought deeply reflective, he retired as it were into the inner dwelling of his mind, there to ponder the insoluble questions of destiny ; like dim curtains, painted with shapes of terror, of gloom, and of weird grandeur, that hang round a dusky hall, waving fitfully in the faint light, these questions appear to have been ever present to his mind, filling it with solemn shadow : he looked upon them as on mystic hieroglyphs, but when he asked their secret, they remained silent as Isis ; he ever turned away, saying, in baffled pride, I will compel your answer in eternity, yet always turned again, fascinated by their sublime mystery, stung by their calm defiance. No word of frivolity escapes him ; he tells men sternly what they have to dare, and do, and suffer ; he never says the burden is light or the foe weak, but the one must be borne and the other must be met. You feel in perusing his works as

in going through a rugged region, where nature, forgetting her gentler moods, desires to write upon the tablet of the world her lessons of solemnity and of power ; you perceive that only hardy plants can breathe this atmosphere, that here no Arcadian lawns can smile, no Utopian palaces arise ; there awakens in you that courage, you seem to be conscious of that sense of greatness, which the strong soul knows in the neighbourhood of crags and forests, where the torrent blends its stern murmur with the music of the mountain blast.

Foster is one of the best representatives of that literary Christian priesthood which is arising in these days. He did not leave his Christianity in the pulpit ; in his every book, and his every article, he speaks as one fully conscious that, by ceasing to preach his religion, he has not obtained any dispensation from the duty of proclaiming it. If asked to indicate what I would deem a fair specimen of that Christianized literature to which I earnestly look as to a fountain of blessedness for these latter times, I know not whither I could point with more decision than to John Foster's contributions to the *Eclectic Review*.

It cannot perhaps be alleged that there is any positively new revelation of truth in the writings of Foster. But they have the originality of spirit and the originality of application : the grain is the ancient grain of Christian truth, of manly sentiment, and of free loyalty ; but it has grown green in the showers of a new spring, and yellow under the suns of a new summer, and it yields a rich harvest, wholesome and pleasant as before, for the food of man. In an age when severe teaching was perhaps more than usually required, Foster recalled the public mind to those stern aspects and realities of our lot which it is never well to forget. His enforcement of the great doctrine of human depravity is in itself sufficient to render his works permanently valuable. And he was perhaps the first distinctly to apprehend and point

out how certain of the great influences of the age are to be dealt with : he fairly understood the French Revolution, and proclaimed the necessity of universal education.

To criticise his separate works is beyond our scope, and would be superfluous. His style, even in its ultimate form, was unquestionably and definably defective. It never became capable of expressing delicate, sprightly, or buoyant emotion ; it wants variety, light graceful force, easy-stepping familiar elegance ; it has always something of an elephantine tread, and its gaiety is apt to remind one rather of the jingling of an elephant's trappings, than of the laughter of children ; or, to change the figure, it never spreads out into wide islanded shallows, rippling to the breeze, and sparkling in the sunbeams, but is always a massive, stately, slow-rolling river. Yet it possesses very rare and excellent qualities. It is remarkably rich and expressive ; you cannot skim along it. Almost strangely, too, considering its mass, it is by no means fatiguing. Continually and unexpectedly, as if nourished by hidden fountains, the flowers of a deeply poetic nature bloom forth on the page. And though it cannot be said to possess sprightliness, yet there is not wanting a pleasantly caustic wit, a quiet, earnest humour. Foster possessed a true vein of humour. Perhaps no style so deeply serious was ever so widely popular.

Foster's biography is essentially that of a thinker ; his external life was that of a thousand Englishmen. He was a shrewd, somewhat sarcastic, but friendly man, loving his friends and social converse, and deeply happy in his family. He excelled in conversation when in a genial atmosphere, and especially when any friend whom he loved and honoured—Hall, Fawcett, Hughes, or such other—was present. He took a deep interest in politics, lending all his influence to the side of freedom.

We noticed Foster's marriage ; we may venture to cast

one look upon him as he lays his Maria, mourning, in the grave. It was in 1832, and he was now sinking into the vale of years. No description of the joy of a long married life, where perfect love and perfect friendship have blended mortal and immortal joys in one pure harmony, could more pathetically body forth its felicity than the following words, written by him when first the light of the present drew away, to rest, like a sunset, on the past :—"I have returned *hither*, but have an utter repugnance to say,—returned *home* ; that name is applicable no longer. . . . There is a weight on the heart which the most friendly human hand cannot remove. The melancholy fact is, that my beloved, inestimable companion has left me. It comes upon me,—in evidence how various and sad ! And yet, for a moment, sometimes I feel as if I could not realize it as true. There is something that seems to say, *can* it be that I shall see her no more ; that I shall still, one day after another, find she is not here ; that her affectionate voice and look will never accost me ; the kind grasp of her hand never more be felt ; that when I would be glad to consult her, make an observation to her, address to her some expression of love, call her 'my dear wife,' as I have done so many thousand times, it will be in vain,—she is not here ? Several times, a considerable number, even since I followed her to the tomb, a momentary suggestion of thought has been, as one and another circumstance has occurred, 'I will tell Maria of this.' " One treads with silence and tears in the sacred neighbourhood of such a sorrow.

As Foster's life drew near its end, the sadness which had ever characterized him became more deep. He never wavered in his trust in God ; but he felt ever the more profoundly that this world is one of sorrow and darkness : he looked wistfully into the future, pondering upon the intermediate state and such subjects ; he walked sadly and solemnly, gathering up questions for eternity.

At last he came to die ; it was October 1844. On his death-bed he showed the same tremulous sensibility to the distress or annoyance of others which had always characterized him. He would permit no servant to sit up with him during the night, and if it was insisted upon, he could not sleep. The fact is little in itself, but of singular interest in the case of Foster.

The substantial peace which he had attained did not desert him in his dying hours. He died as one can die who has well acquitted him in the far sterner duty of living a true and godly life. As he felt his strength gradually stealing away, he remarked on his increasing weakness, and added, "But I can pray, and that is a glorious thing." Truly a glorious thing ; more glorious than atheist or pantheist can even pretend to. To look up to an Omnipotent Father, to speak to Him, to love Him ; to stretch upwards as a babe from the cradle, that He may lift His child in his everlasting arms to the resting-place of His own bosom ; this is the portion of the dying Christian. Foster was overheard thus speaking with himself :—"O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ !" The eye of the terror-crowned was upon him, and thus he defied him.





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